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CHRISTIAN UNITY DOCTRINALLY AND HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED,

IN

EIGHT SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

IN THE YEAR MDCCCXVI,

AT THE

LECTURE

FOUNDED BY

THE LATE REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M. A.

CANON OF SALISBURY.

BY

JOHN HUME SPRY, M. A.

VICAR OF HANBURY, STAFFORDSHIRE, AND MINISTER OF CHRIST CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM.

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1817.

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EXTRACT

FROM

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN BAMPTON,

CANON OF SALISBURY.

——"I give and bequeath my Lands and "Estates to the Chancellor, Masters, and Scho- "lars of the University of Oxford for ever, to "have and to hold all and singular the said "Lands or Estates upon trust, and to the in- "tents and purposes hereinafter mentioned; "that is to say, I will and appoint that the "Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford "for the time being shall take and receive all "the rents, issues, and profits thereof, and (after "all taxes, reparations, and necessary deduc- "tions made) that he pay all the remainder to "the endowment of eight Divinity Lecture "Sermons, to be established for ever in the said "University, and to be performed in the man- "ner following:

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"I direct and appoint, that, upon the first "Tuesday in Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly "chosen by the Heads of Colleges only, and by "no others, in the room adjoining to the Print- "ing-House, between the hours of ten in the "morning and two in the afternoon, to preach "eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year fol- "lowing, at St. Mary's in Oxford, between the "commencement of the last month in Lent "Term, and the end of the third week in Act "Term.

"Also I direct and appoint, that the eight "Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be preached "upon either of the following Subjects—to con- "firm and establish the Christian Faith, and to "confute all heretics and schismatics—upon the "divine authority of the holy Scriptures—upon "the authority of the writings of the primitive "Fathers, as to the faith and practice of the pri- "mitive Church—upon the Divinity of our Lord "and Saviour Jesus Christ—upon the Divinity "of the Holy Ghost—upon the Articles of the "Christian Faith, as comprehended in the "Apostles' and Nicene Creeds.

"Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight "Divinity Lecture Sermons shall be always "printed, within two months after they are

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" preached, and one copy shall be given to the " Chancellor of the University, and one copy to " the Head of every College, and one copy to " the Mayor of the city of Oxford, and one " copy to be put into the Bodleian Library; and " the expence of printing them shall be paid " out of the revenue of the Land or Estates " given for establishing the Divinity Lecture " Sermons; and the Preacher shall not be paid, " nor be entitled to the revenue, before they " are printed.

" Also I direct and appoint, that no person " shall be qualified to preach the Divinity Lec- " ture Sermons, unless he hath taken the de- " gree of Master of Arts at least, in one of the " two Universities of Oxford or Cambridge; " and that the same person shall never preach " the Divinity Lecture Sermons twice."

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SERMON I.

JOHN xvii. 20, 21.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.

NO single precept could have recommended the duty of Unity so forcibly to the hearts and consciences of Christians, as this petition of their Saviour. The thoughts of the blessed Jesus, now ready to offer himself upon the cross, as a sacrifice of atonement for mankind, were wholly occupied in providing for the welfare of those, whom he was about to leave. The last legacy he bequeathed to them, was [a] "peace;" the last commandment he issued, that they should [b] "love one an-

[a] John xiv. 27. [b] John xv. 12.

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"other;" the last prayer he uttered on their behalf, that they might be "one." That this prayer should have been unavailing; and that man, for whose benefit it was preferred, should have opposed obstacles, as yet insurmountable to its accomplishment; are facts, to which experience alone could have extorted our assent. Such however is the truth; Christian unity has been hitherto unattainable, because Christians would not be united; and the state of the world, from the Apostolic age to the present time, has constantly verified the melancholy prediction of our Lord, that he "came not to give peace on earth, but rather division."[c]

It would be waste of time to prove, that this is no necessary result of Christianity; for the very supposition would involve absurdity, if not blasphemy: it would infer, in direct opposition to the testimony of Scripture, and the dictates of reason, that God is the author of confusion; it would represent the divine Founder of our holy

[c] Luke xii. 51.

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religion, praying for the peace and harmony of those, among whom he had himself sown the seeds of unavoidable discord and hostility. As well might it be maintained that God loveth not righteousness, because Christianity does not make all its professors holy; or that he hath [d] "pleasure "in the death of him that dieth," because [e] "many shall seek to enter" into the gate that leadeth unto life, "and shall not be "able." We know that it was the will of Jesus Christ, that his Disciples should dwell together in unity; his exhortations, his commandments, and above all the earnest prayer of which the text forms a part, all prove this. But Omnipotence itself is limited by its own enactments; and [f] when God created man a free agent, and an accountable being, he resigned all control over his conduct subversive of that freedom, and inconsistent with that responsibility. Where therefore his own eternal interests are concerned, man has it in his

[d] Ezek. xviii. 32. [e] Luke xiii. 24.
[f] See Note I. Appendix.

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power to defeat the purposes of God; and such is the fatal perverseness of his nature, that this power is too often exerted to the ruin of his own soul and those of his brethren. When then Christians are [g] "contentious" and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness; [h] "when they go in "the way of Cain," and, instead of loving as brethren, [i] "bite and devour one another," and cherish [k] "bitter envying and "strife in their hearts;" it is not because Christianity has not taught them unity and mutual love, but because they refuse to listen to its precepts; because they are Christians in name only, and have not yet learned what our Saviour meant, when he prayed that all who believed on him, through the word of his Apostles, might "be one, "even as he is one with his Father."

Much indeed has been written to little practical advantage on the subject of Christian unity; and some have been most enthusiastic in its praises, whose conduct

[g] Rom. ii. 8. [h] Jude 11.
[i] Gal. v. 15. [k] James iii. 14.
[l] See Note II. Appendix.

has been in many respects hostile to that peace, which they have extolled. Charity forbids us to believe, that these persons, many of whom were famous in their generation, conspicuous for ardent zeal, and undissected piety, were insincere in their professions; that they loved the strife which they promoted, or despised the unity which they were the unhappy instruments of destroying. But though it would ill become us to bring such a charge against them; yet the too frequent contradiction exhibited between their writings and their actions sufficiently proves, that the real nature of Christian unity has sometimes been grievously mistaken; since those, who have professed themselves to be its warmest advocates, and have been deficient neither in zeal nor ability to promote the cause they undertook to defend, appear in the result to have employed their talents, rather in weakening than in giving strength to the foundations, upon which it must be built. This fact, which an appeal to the ecclesiastical history of our own country will establish upon authority not to be

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shaken, will of itself justify the inquiry intended to be pursued in the present Lecture; in which, as introductory to a more enlarged discussion of the important subject of Christian unity, as it affects the character, the conduct, and the interests of our own Church, I shall endeavour to explain generally the nature of that union, by which our blessed Lord prayed that his Disciples might be distinguished; and to shew, that its production and security formed one great purpose of the religion, which he came to establish. [m] The language of the text carries our ideas upon this subject as high as the human intellect can reach. "Neither pray I for these "alone, but for them also which shall believe "on me through their word; that they all "may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, "and I in thee, that they also may be one "in us: that the world may believe that "thou hast sent me." The model, then, by which the unity of Christians is to be fashioned, is perfect; they are to be one

[m] See Note III. Appendix.

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with each other, even as Christ is one with the Father. The copy of this model must of necessity bear the character of the material, of which it is composed; and when such an imperfect being as man is taught, in any particular, to imitate his Maker, the precept must be interpreted, with due allowances for the infinite disproportion between God and his creatures.

But although the unity of Christians cannot be equal in degree, still it should be similar in kind, to that which it is intended to resemble. And the duty of establishing and preserving it, is to be confined within no other limits, than those which the nature of man necessarily imposes on his exertions.

If every Christian would sincerely and constantly regulate his heart and his affections, his opinions and his practice, by the precepts of the Gospel; doubtless a perfection of unity, hitherto existing only in the imaginations of the benevolent and pious, might obtain among us. But while men continue to be actuated by prejudice and passion, rather than by motives of rea-

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son and duty; while religion itself is but partially obeyed by the best, and wholly disregarded by many, who profess their belief of its truth and obligation; such a state of things must rather be the object of our prayers and wishes, than of our expectations: it may be desired upon the earth, but it can be enjoyed only in heaven. Our Lord himself [n] "knew what was in "man:" he did not therefore trust to individual feelings, for the preservation of that bond, by which he intended his disciples to be connected: and if the object of his prayer is ever accomplished, it must be done, not by the mere impulse of benevolent sentiments; but by the association of Christians, upon the plan marked out for them by the Apostles, under his direction.

But since many have taken very erroneous views of this important subject, by confounding Christian unity with the dispositions of mind, which every Christian ought to cultivate; it may be necessary to examine one or two mistaken notions of it,

[n] John ii. 25.

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before we proceed to inquire what are really its essentials.

I. First, then, Christian unity is not merely a tie of mutual affection. [o] That we should "love our neighbour as our-"selves," is indeed one great distinguishing precept of revealed religion; and where true unity is preserved, the obligations of this precept will doubtless be most strongly felt: but the law, which binds us generally to do good to all, even to our enemies, must not be mistaken for that special bond of union, which connects us as Christian brethren. We may cherish sentiments of good-will towards persons, whose opinions and conduct we are bound in conscience to oppose: but they who would be one with each other, as Christ Jesus is one with his Father, must [p] "be perfectly joined to-"gether, in the same mind, and in the "same judgment;" nay, more than this, they must [q] "walk by the same rule," and "speak the same thing." Christian unity

[o] Mark xii. 31.
[p] 1 Cor. i. 10.
[q] Phil. iii. 16. 1 Cor. i. 10.

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in the true scriptural sense of the term, is undoubtedly the best preservative of Christian benevolence; for they who [r] "have "the same love," who are "of one ac- "cord, and of one mind" upon religion; a subject so deeply involving all that can interest the passions and affections; will be much more likely to [s] "live in peace," than they who differ on a point of such importance. But though its evident tendency is to foster Christian benevolence, yet is the one by no means to be identified with the other; and they who make that tie, by which Christians should be united, to consist wholly in mutual kindness, forbearance, and good-will, are as defective, in their conception of the true principles of Church membership, as they are in their view of the nature of civil society, who resolve all the duties of men, as citizens, and subjects, into a vague indefinite Philanthropy.

II. As Christian unity is not merely a union of hearts and affections, so neither

[r] Phil. ii. 2. [s] 2 Cor. xiii. 11.

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does it consist in, or require an entire union of opinion. We are indeed enjoined to be "all of one mind;" and it was one distinguishing glory of the infant Church, for the short time that it presented a perfect model of union, that the [t] "multitude "of them that believed were of one heart "and one soul." But still, these words must be understood in a sober and qualified sense, or we shall destroy the possibility of unity, by making that essential to it, which never can be obtained.

It is certainly essential to unity, that the fundamentals of Christianity be preserved inviolate. Reason itself seems to prove, that he who holds not the Christian Faith, [u] cannot with propriety be called a Christian: for as the name was first invented to denote those, who believed that Jseus was the Christ; he who believes not the record which God gave of his Son, but doubts, or denies any of those characteristic doctrines, by which this record is to be discerned from all other systems of religion;

[t] Acts iv. 32.

[u] See Note IV. Appendix.

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can neither justly claim to be reckoned of their company, nor properly assume that title, which especially distinguishes them from the rest of mankind.

The Scriptures also, as might be expected, speak strongly and decidedly upon this subject. They teach us to "hold fast "the form of sound words;" and to "stand "fast in one Spirit, with one mind striving "together for the faith of the Gospel:" and lest we should be seduced from these saving truths, they warn us to withdraw from all who [z] "consent not to wholesome words, "even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "and the doctrine which is according to "godliness;" and assure us, that even "if "an angel from heaven should preach any "other Gospel unto us," than that which the Apostles preached, he must "be ac-"cursed." These are however many less important points of Christian doctrine, on which some variety of opinion may safely be allowed. For though the word of God

[x] 2 Tim. i. 13.
[y] Phil. i. 27.
[z] 1 Tim. vi. 3, 5.
[a] Gal. i. 8.

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is truth, and can admit of but one right interpretation; still, as the minds of men are differently constituted, as all have not the same opportunities of information, or the same abilities, in matters of inferior moment, on subjects which are obscurely delivered, and therefore hard to be understood, the ignorant may err, and the learned differ, without a breach of unity. Nay, though such difficult questions should give rise to protracted controversy, the study and investigation thus promoted will tend to serve the cause of truth; and provided the bounds of Christian moderation be not overpassed, neither the peace nor the unity of the Church can sustain a serious injury from the discussion.

In our inquiries, then, into the nature of Christian unity, these cautions are to be observed: first, that we do not confound it with that, which is generally, and should be always, its effect; as they seem to do, who resolve it into a mere union of affection: secondly, that we do not so mis-

See Note V. Appendix.

interpret the unanimity recommended by the Apostles, as to exclude even a shade of difference, upon the most trivial question; and then imagine that unity cannot exist, where this unattainable harmony of opinions is not to be found. We may love our neighbours, and do them good, without living in religious unity with them; for such was the feeling and the conduct of the benevolent [c] Samaritan towards the wounded Jew: and we know that the unity of the Church is not violated by every disagreement in sentiment, respecting things indifferent, which may arise among its members; for St. Paul himself, as we learn from his directions to the [d] Romans concerning meats, and the observance of particular days, left such matters as these to the private conscience of each individual; restricting him only to such a maintenance of his opinion, as might be consistent with the peace of the Church, and the spiritual welfare of his brethren.

[c] Luke x. 33. [d] Rom. xiv.

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If we would form any correct idea of real Christian unity, we must go back to the first preaching of Christianity itself: we shall then discover, in what manner the disciples of Christ were originally one; and this will shew us, how we may preserve a similar union, not only with each other, but with the Catholic Church, of all ages, and in all countries.

Through whatever channel our inquiries may be pursued, they will end in the same point at last; and the history of every Church, which existed for the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity, will conduct us to Jerusalem, and to that congregation of one hundred and twenty persons, who met together, after our Lord's ascension.[e]

This society, to which, three thousand souls were shortly after added, by the preaching of St. Peter on the day of Pentecost,[f] constituted the first Christian Church: and our Saviour himself bore testimony to its connection with him, as its head, by

[e] Acts i. 15. [f] Acts ii. 41.

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sending the Comforter, to abide with it, according to his promise.

From this Church the Apostles went forth, as the Spirit of God directed them; and, in their separate provinces, erected other Churches, upon the same platform, and after the same model. Each of these soon comprehended within it many separate congregations, under rulers and governors receiving their commission from Apostolic authority; and was distinguished by its appropriate appellation, as the [g] "Church at Corinth;" the [h] "Church at "Antioch;" but all were known as one body, under the title of the [i] "Church of "Christ."

There was then, from the first, a common bond of union, by which Christians, in every part of the world, were formed into one society. Each individual was a member of some particular congregation, under its own pastor; that congregation was connected with others in the same Church, by the superintending authority

[g] 1 Cor. i. 2. [h] Acts xiii. 1. [i] Eph. v. 23.

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of one bishop; and all these episcopal Churches were subordinate to one head, even Jesus Christ; the Author of that faith, which they all professed; the Founder of that kingdom, of which they considered themselves to form a part; the Fountain of that spiritual power, [k] "by which the whole "body of the Church is governed."

Such is a brief summary of the information, to be gathered from the Scriptures, upon this subject. The Evangelist St. Luke records the labours of the Apostles, and particularly those of St. Paul and his associates, much of which he himself personally witnessed: he describes them as travelling from city to city, and from province to province; preaching the Gospel; converting disciples; collecting them into societies; and ordaining ministers to rule over each, who were to be accountable to them for the discharge of their sacred office. To some of these societies, or churches, so constituted, the Epistles of St. Paul are addressed: and from them we

[k] Collect for Good Friday.

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learn, not only the extent of the spiritual authority, which he himself, as the chosen apostle of Christ, felt justified in assuming; but also the form of government, which, in common with his fellow labourers, the other Apostles, he framed, and the means, which he provided for its perpetuity.

All these churches then, wherever they were situated, had the same common origin; for they were built upon one foundation, by those [k] "wise masterbuilders," who received their commission immediately from Christ himself. This unity of [l] origin was deemed so essential to the character of a true Church, in the early ages of Christianity, that it is applied by the Fathers as a touchstone, by which the false pretensions of heretics to be so esteemed might be at once discovered. "Let them produce," says [m] Tertullian, "the origin of their churches; let them "unfold the order of their bishops; so "proceeding, by regular succession, from

[k] 1 Cor. iii. 10. [l] See Note VI. Appendix.
[m] See Note VII. Appendix.

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"the beginning, that their first bishop "may be shewn to have been appointed, "either by one of the Apostles, or by "apostolical authority."

Unless this could be satisfactorily ascertained, they could not be deemed any part of Christ's spiritual kingdom, because they were not governed by his delegated authority; and where such a defect of origin existed, the holy Father rightly judged, that it not only deprived them of all claim to be called churches of Christ, but also sufficiently accounted for their heretical depravations of his doctrine. He knew that the true qualities of a stream will best be discovered by tracing it to its source.

The water indeed which issues from the Rock of ages may be so corrupted in its passage, as to lose its salutary virtues; but the casual impurities contracted in its course will at any time be removed by clearing the channel through which it flows; while no cleansing can ever purify the stream, which issues from a corrupted

[n] See Note VIII. Appendix.

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source; nor render that the living water, which springs not from the well of life. The unity of the Church does not however depend merely on its common origin, nor on its subordination to one supreme head. There must be some points, in which all its component parts agree; some things which all hold in common; and which render them essentially and evidently one; though composed of different individuals, situated in different places, and existing at different times. Societies of Christians may be formed, upon any plan suggested by the imagination of their founders; and they may profess their obedience to the "great Shepherd of the sheep:" but this will not entitle them to be considered as parts of that one holy Catholic Church, which he himself founded.

None can be so considered, unless they not only can shew that they derive their origin from Apostolic authority; but that they preserve inviolate whatever is essential to that holy and peculiar fellowship, by

o Heb. xiii. 20.

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which it was our Saviour's will that all churches of the saints, in all ages, should be connected with each other, and separated from the world of the unbelievers.

The true Church of Christ may be known, then, by the following characteristics, each of which constitutes a part of that unity, which we are endeavouring to illustrate.

1. It must be built upon one common foundation, even Jesus Christ; for we are positively assured that [p] "other foundation "can no man lay, than that is laid:" and in another place it is declared, that the Church is [q] "built upon the foundation "of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus "Christ being the chief corner stone." And as the foundation of every part of it must be the same, so ought the superstructure to be similar. God is not a [r] God of confusion, but of order: since therefore the Church is called, [s] "the house of "God," and since we are taught to be-

p 1 Cor. iii. 11.
q Eph. ii. 20.
r 1 Cor. xiv. 33.
s Heb. iii. 6.

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lieve, that it is [t] "a building fitly framed "together in Christ," that it may become "a holy temple unto the Lord;" we must believe, that the plan of the divine architect is uniform; and that this Church, wherever it is builded according to his directions, will present the same appearance, the same perfect symmetry, and due proportion of all its parts to one another, according to their dignity and use.

Wherever then a part of the true Church exists, there we reasonably expect to find that form of government which the Apostles established; for since it is a spiritual society, instituted by God, who originally set in it the different orders of men by whom it was to be ruled; where that constitution is not to be found; where Christians are united together by any code of laws, or system of government, of mere human invention; there may indeed be an association of men serving God, and professing to believe in Christ; but can we say without a solecism that there is a Christian Church?

[t] Eph. ii. 21, 22.

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2. "Another characteristic of the Church of Christ is, that it holds one common system of faith and worship; that wheresoever dispersed throughout the whole world, its members agree in believing those doctrines, which Jesus Christ and his Apostles taught; and in observing a mode of publicly serving God, in all its leading features essentially the same. Every National Church is indeed possessed of power and authority to decree rites and ceremonies for the use of its members; and is restrained in the exercise of that power by no other tie, than the apostolic injunction, that, [x] "all things should be done decently "and in order." But there are certain essentials of Christian worship, which the Supreme Head of the Church has himself ordained; the observance of which is therefore every where indispensable.

Undoubtedly we should not call that a Christian Church, where the two sacraments, which Christ himself ordained as means of grace, and pledges of his favour

[u] See Note IX. Appendix. [x] 1 Cor. xiv. 40.

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and assistance, were either entirely excluded from the public devotions of its members, or not duly administered. Such then are the [y] marks by which every true Church of Christ must be distinguished: where these marks are found, there is a portion of the spiritual kingdom of the Lord our Redeemer established; and by [z] virtue of these, the whole body of Christ is to be accounted one, however dispersed throughout the world, however locally divided into national churches, into archiepiscopal provinces, or into episcopal dioceses, and parochial districts; however also the several national, or provincial churches of which it is composed may be distinguished from each other by their own peculiar observances; by differences in that part of their ritual, which is of human authority only; or in the interpretation of such opinions, as do not affect the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. The Church thus constituted derives its origin

[y] See Note X. Appendix.
[z] See Note XI. Appendix.

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from one common source: it is built upon the same foundation, and after one uniform model: it is subject to the same form of government, administered by persons to whom the commission, by which they act, has been regularly handed down from the Apostles: it addresses its prayers to the same God and Father of all, relying upon the merits and mediation of one Saviour, the God incarnate, for their acceptance: it professes therefore one common faith, it is solaced by one common hope, and participates in those sacraments, which bind all its members by the same conditions, and under the same penalties, to holiness of life and conversation; to love God with all their hearts, and their neighbour as themselves.

If we consider the effect, which the Christian Church, framed upon such principles, and adhering steadfastly to its own constitution, must have produced upon the conduct and affections of mankind, wherever it was established; it will be easily perceived, that when our Saviour prayed, that his Disciples might be one,

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he neglected nothing which could be devised, consistently with the freedom of human will, to secure the object of his petition.

For what can be [a] conceived more likely to promote peace on earth, than a spiritual association, which, at once independent of all human institutions, and interwoven with them, should by degrees pervade every region of the globe; and offer to persons of all nations, characters, and habits, the same objects of faith and hope, the same motives to moral action?—an association which, while it acknowledged its dependence upon one supreme head, its origin from one common fountain, its obligation to obey the same code of laws, should be connected by an external system of discipline essentially one; and ruled by governors, deriving their authority from the same source, and responsible for their administration of it to the same Lord?

What could tend more forcibly to cherish sentiments of good-will among men,

[a] See Note XII. Appendix.

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than a common bond of union, by which all Christians, of every country, should be taught to consider each other as brethren, and to love each other as themselves? How could men have despised those, whom they knew to be partakers in the same spiritual privileges in which they gloried; to be walking by the same rule, bound by the same duties, animated by the same hopes, worshipping the same God? How could any Christian have vexed or persecuted those, for whose sakes, as well as for his own, he acknowledged that his Saviour had died; those whom he expected hereafter to meet at the tribunal of an impartial judge; and with whom, if they both adhered with equal steadiness to their common engagements, he hoped to live for ever in heaven?

To the mind of a reflecting person, who has embraced Christianity, not as a nominal distinction only, or as a mere speculative system of doctrine, but as his religion, as the rule by which he is to walk in this life, and be judged in the next; any one of these considerations would appear

sufficient to induce him to cultivate that "peace of God," which the externalities of Christian unity were intended to preserve, and which is indeed the very spirit of unity itself. Still, though the obligation to maintain this "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" is thus undoubted, all those inducements have not yet proved strong enough to effect its accomplishment.

Where the Lord of the vineyard has sowed wheat, the enemy has contrived to scatter tares; and so artfully has the work of disorder and destruction been carried on, that every motive to charity has been made an occasion of dissension; the gracious plan, which was intended to secure the interchange of brotherly love and kindness between every individual, and every congregation of Christians throughout the world, has become itself the subject of controversy, and the cause of division; and the fiercest contentions have arisen out of the discussion of those very essentials of unity, which were ordained to be the ties of mutual harmony and peace. So far has the

[b] Phil. iv. 7. [c] Eph. iv. 3.

evil proceeded, that the true nature of Christian unity has been lost sight of; men have disputed about the different component parts of the common bond of Christians, till its character, as a whole, has been forgotten; and the subject itself has been deemed rather matter of speculation, than of practical utility. The golden chain, by which the great Author and Finisher of our faith intended to connect every individual who bore his name with each other, and with himself, has been removed, link by link, until what remains of it is wholly incompetent to the purpose, for which it was framed; while the very persons, who, with fretful impatience, have cast away the bands of their Master and Lord, as if conscious of the necessity and importance of the union thus rashly dissolved, have endeavoured ineffectually to supply its place by inventions of their own.

The miserable inefficiency of these efforts fully proves the vanity and the danger of interfering with the ordinances of God: they have hitherto produced nothing, but a mixture without concord; a

combination, without harmony, a seeming agreement, without a single point of real union. The utmost which has been effected, has amounted only to a short-lived dissimulation of cherished antipathies; a cloak of friendship, assumed to conceal opinions, views, and interests never to be reconciled; which those, whom some temporary object induces to suppress for the moment, appear to compromise, only that they may be able ultimately to enforce them, with increased authority. If this be Christian unity, how shall the earnest prayer of Christ be accomplished by its establishment? or wherein will his Church have attained to that singleness of views and interests, of principles and affections, of nature and of essence, which must have been the object of its Divine founder, when he intreated, that, as he was one with his Father, and his Father with him, even so all his disciples might be one also. The question may be left to answer itself. But since the great adversary of our holy religion has so far prevailed, as to introduce dissension under the semblance of unity,

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and mutual disagreement under that of peace; it becomes us to be aware of his devices, prepared to resist them, and, if it please God, to check their progress. This cannot be effectually done, until we have obtained a clear view of that entire system of harmony and love, which our Lord himself intended to establish; that we may distinguish the spurious union, which it becomes every one, in his own place and station, strenuously to combat, from that genuine blessing, which should be the object of our earnest wishes, our continual pursuit.

For this purpose, the following Discourses will be devoted to an inquiry into the essentials of Christian unity; the causes which have operated to interrupt it; and the circumstances which have hitherto counteracted every project for its restoration.

For the more perspicuous and satisfactory conduct of this investigation, it is intended,

1. First, to state the means provided by our Saviour for the maintenance of unity,

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by the institution of the Christian priesthood; to which holy order, as constituted by the Apostles, has the government of the Church been intrusted.

2. Secondly, it is proposed to inquire how far an agreement in certain doctrines, and a conformity to particular modes of worship, are to be considered as necessary to the preservation of unity; the former as the way by which Christians are [c] "builded "together, upon the foundation of the "Apostles and Prophets, for an habitation "of God through the Spirit;" the latter, as it ensures to every member of the Church that great privilege of his high calling, a participation in the ordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost; and conduces to that order and decency, which ought to characterise the devotions of a Christian congregation.

3. The essentials of Christian unity thus ascertained, the inquiry will be directed, in the third place, to the principal causes of that disunion, so long and so unhappily prevailing among those, who profess to be servants of the same Lord.

[c] Eph. ii. 20, 22.

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4. The principles and conduct, by which our Church has been distinguished in times of trouble and discord, will next pass under consideration; with a view to shew, that, far from having caused, or perpetuated the offences, which have so long disturbed her tranquillity, their prevention or removal have been the objects of her continued endeavour, her earnest solicitude.

5. The different attempts to heal the breaches of Christian unity, which have been made, either by individuals, or by associations formed for that purpose, will then be traced; that the injurious consequences, which have resulted from these ineffectual exertions, may be clearly perceived.

6. Lastly. The discouraging reflections, which such a review of former mistakes and disappointments is calculated to awaken, will be best allayed, by turning our thoughts to that great consummation, which the language of Scripture appears to justify us in expecting; when the crooked shall at last be made straight, and the rough places

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plain; when the truth of Christianity shall prevail over every effort, made by the spirit of error and delusion; and the [c] peace of God shall rule in the hearts of his servants, and make them all one in Christ Jesus.

And as it becomes us, while we console ourselves by looking forward to this joyful period, to endeavour, by every means in our power, to hasten its arrival; some reflections upon the duty of Christians in these days of confusion and disorder; upon the remedies, which they have it in their own power to apply to them, the dispositions, which they should cherish, and the rule by which they should walk in such dangerous times, will form a proper conclusion to the whole inquiry. The subject, which it is thus proposed to discuss, has been undertaken, with a deep and anxious sense of its difficulties and importance; with no intention of widening breaches, which all must wish to close; or of irritating feelings, already much too sensitive; but with a sin-

[c] Col. iii. 15.

cere desire of recalling, if possible, the heated and distracted minds of Christians to a sober consideration of their common interest and duty; and of laying before the younger part of this congregation such a view of that real unity, which our Lord intended to establish, as may guard them against the dangerous errors, by which some perhaps of its most conscientious advocates have been hitherto misled.

Many fallacious descriptions of this blessed state are indeed abroad in the world; descriptions but too well calculated to blind the judgment, while they gain upon the affections; and to make the most benevolent feelings, and the most pious intentions, the instruments of disorganization and confusion. Many projects, plausible and attractive in their appearance, are continually recommended, and ardently supported, for the professed purpose of softening the acrimony of religious dissension, and uniting the affections of Christians. Experience however has fully proved, that while some of these are inefficient, others are more dangerous in their tendency

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to the interests of pure religion, even than the discord, which it is their object to remove. But the devices, which the good providence of God has formerly brought to nothing, are still again resorted to, and in a more insinuating and seductive form. If those therefore, on whom the important charge of defending the vineyard of the Lord is hereafter to devolve, would be prepared to detect, expose, and defeat such attempts, they must learn wisdom from the experience of former times of trouble and conflict; that being fully instructed in the dangers, to which the Church has repeatedly been exposed, by the attacks of open enemies, or the insidious exertions of pretended friends, they may be enabled to [e] "mark those "who cause divisions," whatever may be their pretext, and to "avoid them;" and that knowing what real unity is, they may seek it, as the greatest of temporal blessings; as the best preparation for that heavenly state, where charity, the leading

[e] Rom. xvi. 17.

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grace of Christianity, shall reign triumphant in every heart; when faith is absorbed in vision, and hope is swallowed up in enjoyment.

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SERMON II

EPH. iv. 12

. . . e gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; . . .
and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and
teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for
the work of the ministry, for the edifying of
the body of Christ:

IT is impossible to read this plain statement without perceiving that our Lord Jesus Christ intended His disciples to be formed into a society, under rulers and governors appointed by Himself: for they are expressly called "the body of Christ:" and the same Apostle, in other places, describes them as "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;" and says that they were to be "built up" and "compacted by that which every joint supplieth," and to "grow up in Him."

The Apostle does not indeed here enumerate the different orders of the priest-

[a] See Note [illegible] Appendix.

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SERMON II.

EPH. iv. 11, 12.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

IT is impossible to read this plain statement without perceiving, that our Lord Jesus Christ intended his disciples to be formed into a society, under rulers and governors appointed by himself; for they are expressly called "the body of Christ;" and the several [a] officers, by whose ministration they were to be "edified" and "perfected," are said to have been "given by him."

The Apostle does not indeed here enumerate the different orders of the priest-

[a] See Note XIII. Appendix.

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hood, as we find them afterwards established; because it was not his object to instruct the Ephesians in the particular form of ecclesiastical government ordained by Christ; but to convince them that it was their duty to maintain the [b] "unity of the "Spirit in the bond of peace." And this he does, by shewing them that they were members of a society, expressly instituted for the preservation of unity; and for that reason provided by its divine Founder with ministers of different ranks, and separate duties; each of whom in his station was to labour for the peace and good order of the Church; and to lead its members, by degrees, to that perfection of knowledge and practice, which he afterwards calls [c] "the "measure of the stature of the fulness of "Christ."

The text therefore, speaking of the Church as a visible society framed by Christ; and declaring that they who bear rule in it, officiate by virtue of a commission received from him; naturally di-

[b] Eph. iv. 3. [c] Eph. iv. 13.

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rects our thoughts to that subject, which it is the design of the present discourse to illustrate. If the Church be a visible society, it must have a visible form of government; that form of government must be administered by certain fixed and lawful authorities; and to that government every man, who continues a member of the society, is bound to conform; and to obey the power, by which it is administered.

These propositions are assumed as the basis of the whole argument; and they lead us to inquire, what was the form of Church government which our Saviour instituted; and who were the rulers appointed by him to uphold its authority.

That no doubt might remain in the mind of Christians, as to the nature of that Church into which they were admitted, it is spoken of in the Scriptures under various names, which all illustrate the same truth; that it is a spiritual incorporation, of which Christ is the head. It is called the [d] "kingdom of heaven," the

[d] Matt. xiii. 11.

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[e] "dominion of Christ," the [f] "city," the [g] "house," and the [h] "household of "God:" every one of these terms conveys the idea of association, and declares the head or governor of this society to be the Lord Christ.

To distinguish it however from mere temporal governments, all of which may in some sense be called the kingdom of God, since he ruleth over all; and to convince us that the sovereignty of Christ over his Church is of a more specific and particular kind, than the superintendance of God's providence over secular kingdoms; we are told in the text, and in other parts of Scripture, that the Church is "the "body of Christ," [k] united to him, and under his influence, as the natural body is joined to the head, and directed by it; and that by virtue of our admittance into it, we are all become [l] members of this one body, and are therefore bound to obey him, and to love one another.

[e] Dan. vii. 14. [f] Heb. xii. 22. [g] Heb. x. 21.
[h] Eph. ii. 19. [i] Eph. i. 23. Col. i. 24.
[k] See Note XIV. Appendix. [l] Rom. xii. 5.

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The Church then, being a spiritual society, taken out of the world, yet existing in it; intimately connected with the temporal governments of the nations in which it is planted, yet in its spiritual character independent of them all; it was necessary for its preservation, that it should possess a form of government of its own, binding all its members together by a common rule of obedience, and training them in the duties of their new profession. Government is indeed[m] essential to the very being of a society; without it men may congregate, but they cannot associate; the constitution to which they submit is the bond which unites them; and when this is dissolved, they are reduced again to the state of unconnected individuals.

This constitution was also necessary for the defence of the Church against external enemies, as well as for the maintenance of its internal peace and security. It is to be remembered, that this spiritual kingdom

[l] See Note XV. Appendix.

[m] See Note XVI. Appendix.

existed for three hundred years after the resurrection of its divine Founder, not only unsupported and unprotected by any temporal authority, but in defiance of all human power, which was exerted in vain to resist its influence, and effect its destruction. In those days of trial and persecution, Christians, wherever dispersed throughout the world, formed but [n] one body, under one head; professing the same faith; bound by the same laws; obeying rulers similar in office, authority, and appointment: and this it was which enabled the Church to flourish and increase, notwithstanding all the fury and malice of its enemies. Had the kingdom been [o] "divided against itself," it must have been "brought to desola-"tion;" its union was its strength; and the principal bond of this union, was obedience to a common form of government, administered by officers appointed by, and responsible to, the same sovereign Lord.

The necessity of this constitution, as the safeguard of the Church, will still further

[n] See Note XVII. Appendix. [o] Matt. xii. 25.

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appear, when we consider, that it was not composed of a few individuals only, holding their meetings in a small confined district, and possessing a power of immediate communication with each other upon every emergency: but that, even at this early period, it had extended itself throughout the then known world; that its [p] congregations were to be found in every province, and in every city; that its members were confined to no one rank or order of men, but abounded in all; that they pleaded in the courts of justice, and fought in the armies of the nations, who were leagued for their destruction; that they were conspicuous among the high and the low; that they partook in the deliberations of the senator, and the gains of the merchant; that they inhabited the palaces of the rich, as well as the cottages of the poor; so that an eloquent [q] apologist scrupled not to affirm, that, if the Christians were to withdraw themselves into deserts from the dominion of their persecutors,

[p] See Note XVIII. Appendix.

[q] See Note XIX. Appendix.

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the Romans would want subjects to govern, and the empire would reckon more enemies than citizens.

What then could have preserved this body, so widely dispersed, and composed of materials so various; what could have connected the noble, with his slave; the learned and elegant Greek, with the unlettered barbarian; the conqueror and the vanquished, by ties which no human force could dissolve; but the powerful operation of conscientious adherence to one common system of spiritual discipline and subordination?

As the Church could not have maintained its ground against external attacks, had not a common form of government, universally acknowledged, reverenced, and obeyed by its members, given it that compactness and solidity, that community of interest and affection, requisite to sustain it under the discouraging circumstances of its first establishment; so neither could it have escaped the evils of internal discord;[r]

[r] See Note XX. Appendix.

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evils at any time to be deplored, as weakening its influence, and undermining its authority; but, in its then infant state, necessarily fatal to its very existence.

The abilities and inclinations, the views and interests of men are so different, that mutual independence must, almost of necessity, produce mutual dissension: and had not the Apostles been enabled to delegate to successors the power they themselves possessed; and to frame a system of government, of perpetual duration and authority; the Church could not, humanly speaking, have survived its original rulers. For as [s] when there was no king in Israel, every man did what was right in his own eyes; so no sooner would the power of enforcing submission to some legal government have ceased, than the Christian society must have been dissolved; and the Christian faith, without some extraordinary interposition of Providence, must have perished with it; for every one being left free to think as well as to act for

[s] Judges xvii. 6.

himself, the religious opinions of men would have speedily become as various and discordant, as their dispositions and information.

But that we may not seem to build upon mere abstract reasoning, when proofs of a more direct and convincing nature are within our reach; let us examine the evidence afforded by the language of Scripture, in support of the positions which it is our object to illustrate and confirm.

That the Church, from the first, possessed a form of government of its own, in its origin and its object independent of the civil institutions of the countries, in which it existed, is a matter of fact; to be proved, as all facts are, by reference to authentic history. That this form of government was originally established under divine direction, and that it was administered by persons, whom Christ himself authorised to exercise it; that these persons, acting under the same guidance, appointed their assistants and successors in the ministry, expressly enjoining them to consecrate others, by whom the power they

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possessed might be handed down from age to age; are truths, respecting which the declarations of the inspired writings are explicit and decisive. So that we may confidently affirm, that the evidence of that divine commission, by virtue of which the holy office of the priesthood is now exercised in the Christian Church, is at least as complete and satisfactory as that, on which we are contented to receive any historical fact whatever; inasmuch as the authenticity of the holy Scriptures rests upon authority more unquestionable perhaps than that of any mere human composition.

It will not be denied, that the Apostles themselves were invested with plenary power, before they entered upon the duties of their high office. [t] "As the Father "hath sent me," said our Saviour, "even "so send I you; and when he had said "this, he breathed on them, and saith "unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: "whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remit-

[t] John xx. 21, 22, 23.

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" ted unto them; and whosesoever sins ye " retain, they are retained."

No form of words can be conceived capable of impressing our minds with a higher idea of apostolic authority than this commission, which constitutes them, not only the pastors and teachers, but the lawgivers and judges of that Church, which they were to found. Should it be objected, that this commission was merely personal, and that it ceased with the lives of those, on whom it was bestowed; it may be answered, that we have the same [u] evidence to prove the continuance of the commission to the successors of the Apostles, as to substantiate the fact of its having been originally granted to them.

For he, who is the source of all power, and from whom alone, whatever is done by the governors of the Church derives its sanction, expressly declared, that the authority, with which the ministers of his word were invested, was not temporary, but permanent; that it was not granted to

[u] See Note XXI. Appendix.

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the Apostles only, to enable them to build the Church, but to their successors also, throughout all ages, that they might uphold and preserve the edifice entrusted to their care. [x] "Lo I am with you alway, "even unto the [y] end of the world."

From these facts, which are recorded in the Scriptures, and which seem necessarily to imply that which other historical testimony confirms, we infer, that the Apostles, in the exercise of the power thus vested in them, instituted that ecclesiastical polity, which was maintained in the Church, without interruption, until the period of the Reformation; and is, even now, preserved unimpaired, in the greater part of the Christian world.

We are told by the evangelist, that after our Saviour's [z] "passion, he shewed him-"self alive to his Apostles by many infal-"lible proofs; and continued with them "forty days, speaking of the things per-"taining to the kingdom of God." That

[x] Matt. xxviii. 20. [y] See Note XXII. Appendix.
[z] Acts i. 3.

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by the "kingdom of God" we are here to understand the visible association of Christians for religious purposes, under a government divinely appointed, may reasonably be [a] presumed; and the subsequent conduct of those, to whom these discourses were addressed, will furnish us with the best criterion, by which to judge of their subject and intent.

When then we know, that the Lord Jesus held many conversations with his Apostles relative to the economy of his kingdom; and are also certain, that, in all which related to the due discharge of their office, as the founders and first rulers of this kingdom, they acted under the especial influence of the Holy Spirit, sent by him to guide them into all truth; we cannot hesitate to believe, that the order of government, which they solemnly appointed, and strictly enjoined their successors to continue, was of divine institution, and was intended to be of perpetual use in the Church.

[a] See Note XXIII. Appendix.

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The power exercised by the Apostles themselves is easily to be collected from their own acts, as recorded by St. Luke, and from the Epistles of St. Paul. Therein we learn, that they took cognizance of the opinions and practice of their disciples; [b] forbidding them to exercise some civil rights, as contrary to their [c] Christian duty; punishing them by spiritual censures, and by exclusion from spiritual privileges, for offences against the [d] moral law; and by similar penalties coercing those, who made [e] "shipwreck of their faith," and blasphemed the worthy name by which they were called.

In addition to this judicial authority, they performed all the offices of the priesthood; preaching, baptizing, administering the Lord's Supper, and [f] offering up the common devotions of the disciples in their public congregations.

And they also assumed certain peculiar powers, which none but their own order

[b] See Note XXIV. Appendix. [c] 1 Cor. vi. 1.
[d] 1 Cor. v. 5. [e] 1 Tim. i. 19, 20.
[f] See Note XXV. Appendix.

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were allowed to exercise: they only could lay hands upon baptized persons, to [f] confirm them in possession of the privileges of Christianity; and they only could [g] ordain ministers to officiate in the Christian priesthood.

Such, exclusive of all especial gifts and graces, was their ordinary authority, as rulers in the Church of Christ; and this authority we know that they committed to others, who were to act as their successors. They were to [h] ordain elders, to preside over them, and take care that they taught no other doctrine than the [i] truth; they were to superintend the public [k] service; to be examples to the believers [l]; to be themselves teachers, and preachers of the word [m]; and to maintain their supremacy over the elders and deacons, against all who presumed to [n] gainsay or despise its exercise.

In a word, it is impossible to read the

[f] Acts viii. 14. [g] Acts xiv. 23.
[h] 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. i. 5.
[i] 1 Tim. i. 3. [k] 1 Tim. ii. 1.
[l] 1 Tim. iv. 12. [m] 2 Tim. iv. 1, 2. Tit. ii. 1.
[n] 1 Tim. iv. 12. Tit. ii. 15.

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two Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, and that to Titus, without acknowledging, that they were admitted by him to a full participation in his own authority; that the power of [o]ordination was committed exclusively to them, in the churches over which they were appointed to preside; and that all the members of these churches, whether laity or clergy, were placed under their government; and made responsible to them for their religious conduct.

Though we have not the same infallible testimony of Scripture respecting the practice of the Apostles in the other churches which they planted, we could not have doubted, that they all pursued the same rule, even had history been silent upon the subject. But this is not the case. We have abundant [p]authority for asserting, that they left their successors every where established; and that, from that period to the present, the same distinction of office, and spiritual power, has been regularly

[o] See Note XXVI. Appendix.
[p] See Note XXVII. Appendix.

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preserved, which now is maintained in our own excellent Church.

Such then being the evidence by which the fact is supported, that what is now called the episcopal form of Church government was originally of apostolic institution, and has been regularly derived to us from its founders; it is of little consequence by what name the successors of the Apostles, in their peculiar powers of ordination and supremacy, were distinguished.

It may be allowed, that the title, by which they are at present known, is not exclusively appropriated to them in the Scriptures; although it is certain, that by this title they were designated in the age immediately succeeding.

Granting however thus much, what do we concede? Our Saviour himself is mentioned by the sacred writers under many different appellations: he is called the [q] Messiah, the [r] Redeemer, the [s] Saviour,

[q] John i. 41. [r] Isaiah lxiii. 16.
[s] 2 Pet. iii. 18. et passim.

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the [t] Head, the [u] King, the [x] Lord, the [y] High Priest, the [z] Bishop, the [a] Deacon. Yet this variety of titles has never caused any confusion among Christians, with respect to the real nature of his office. The Apostles are styled [b] presbyters and [c] deacons; yet we readily understand that their office in the Church was essentially different from that of the presbyters and deacons, properly so called. It must indeed be confessed, that the [d] controversy, which has been built upon the promiscuous use of these several names in Scripture, did not originate from any real difficulty of distinguishing the different orders in the Christian priesthood. The unvarying practice of the whole Church for so many centuries sufficiently proves, that this distinction was well defined, and universally understood. But when the unhappy circumstances, under which the Reformation

[t] Ephes. i. 22.
[u] 1 Tim. vi. 15.
[x] 1 Tim. vi. 15. et passim.
[y] Heb. iv. 14.
[z] 1 Pet. ii. 25.
[a] Rom. xv. 8.
[b] 1 Pet. v. 1.
[c] 2 Cor. iii. 6. Ephes. iii. 7.
[d] See Note XXVIII. Appendix.

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was accomplished in foreign countries, had induced, perhaps compelled, some of its leaders, to depart from the original constitution of the Church; their immediate successors, influenced by implicit veneration for their character to adhere to the innovations which they had introduced, as well as the reforms which they had effected, were tempted to borrow arguments for the justification of their conduct, from the indifferent use of these titles, in the days of the Apostles.

There is not however, it may be confidently affirmed, any historical fact, capable of more complete authentication than this; that the Apostles appointed a superior order of men in the Church, to whom alone, among other peculiar privileges, was committed the power of continuing their own succession, and that of the other members of the priesthood.

The distinction of the office is, as we have seen, strongly marked in their own writings; and in the age immediately succeeding, when many of the churches still remained under the superintendance of

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those set over them by the Apostles themselves; and almost all were under the direction of persons, who had either known these holy men, or had been brought up at the feet of their disciples; this distinction was not only recognized, but [e] insisted upon in the most forcible terms, as essential to the very being of the Church. Are we then to believe, that the Apostles erred in framing this constitution for the Church, and enjoining its continuance? or that their successors imposed a form of government of their own invention upon the whole body of Christians, as that which the Apostles established? or shall we suppose, that an hierarchy, confessedly of apostolic origin, received as such by the whole Church for fifteen hundred years, and considered as essential, not only to its welfare, but to its very existence, as a divinely constituted society, ceased on a sudden to be necessary, and even became pernicious, superstitious, and abominable in his sight, under whose especial direction it was originally formed?

[e] See Note XXIX. Appendix.

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The first of these suppositions requires no refutation: and until it can be [f] proved, that some congregation of Christians in the first century publicly protested against the usurpation of those, who claimed their spiritual obedience, and who attempted to impose upon them, as an apostolic institution, an episcopacy, which the Apostles never ordained; we may assume it as an undoubted fact, that no such usurpation ever took place, no such imposition was ever practised.

Nor, thirdly, can it be admitted, that any change has since been made, which has invalidated the authority, or destroyed the necessity of episcopacy.

The very persons, who first believed themselves compelled, for a time, to dispense with it, maintained no such opinion. On the contrary, they [g] lamented it as a serious, though, as they conceived, an unavoidable evil; declaring, in the most explicit terms, their reverence for the episco-

[f] See Note XXX. Appendix.
[g] See Note XXXI. Appendix.

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pal order, and their anxiety to abide by any conditions, short of a sinful departure from the faith of Christ, under which it might be retained.

How far the reasons, by which these illustrious men justified their conduct, were well founded, it is now unnecessary to inquire; but that they were actuated by an ardent zeal for the truth of Christianity cannot be questioned; for they cheerfully hazarded their lives in its defence. It is certain that the difficulties, which opposed their endeavours to preserve the discipline as well as the faith of the Church, according to the primitive model, were very great; and, though they failed to remove them, we have no reason to doubt that they were sincere in their wishes and attempts to succeed: nay, the very earnestness with which they pleaded the insuperable necessity of their situation, as their apology for setting up a new form of ecclesiastical polity, will sufficiently prove, that they admitted the authority of that government, which the Church, until then, had universally received.

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It must not however be hastily [i] conceded, that the excuse, which they pleaded for departing from the primitive model, may justify their successors in adhering to novel institutions, when similar obstacles no longer interposed to prevent their return to episcopacy.

If this continued rejection of the apostolic regimen be defended at all, it must be upon very different grounds. But this is a question, which it belongs not to our present subject to discuss: undoubtedly many allowances are to be made for habits of thought, and prejudices of education; and it will be our wisdom, as well as our duty, to leave the decision of such matters to that Being, who [k] "searcheth the hearts" of men. He alone knoweth how far ignorance is so invincible, or prejudices are so strong and sincere, as to be warrantably alleged in defence of a departure from his positive institutions. It is however important to remark, that this unhappy deviation from the apostolic form of Church

[i] See Note XXXII. Appendix. [k] Rom. viii. 27.

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government has afforded demonstrative proof of the utility, nay of the necessity of that government, as an instrument of unity.

For it is an indisputable fact, that heresies and schisms have grievously [1] increased since that period; and that they have abounded no where so much, and so fatally, as among those, who have thrown off the salutary superintendance of that hierarchy, originally appointed "for the "perfecting of the saints, for the work of "the ministry, for the edifying of the body "of Christ."

There was, we know, a period in our own national history, when the persevering efforts of a designing and powerful faction in the State, co-operating with religious prejudices and animosities, and perhaps too much assisted by the ill digested and vacillating measures of a weak, though well meaning government, had succeeded in shaking the pillars both of Church and State to their very foundations.

Even a slight acquaintance with the

[1] See Note XXXIII. Appendix.

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events of these distracted times will point out the danger of removing the salutary restraints of established forms and constituted authority; and will sufficiently prove to us, that Christian unity cannot long be preserved, when the Christian priesthood is rejected. They who assume a right to consecrate their own priests, will soon follow the example of [m] Micah the Ephraimite yet one step farther, and make their own religion. The busy spirit of innovation, and the bold restlessness of speculation, can only be effectually checked by an habitual reverence for long established ordinances and legitimate power: and as they who have chosen their own civil rulers have generally obeyed them no longer than their prejudices were flattered, or some temporary and sinister purposes promoted by the mock submission; so they who appoint their own religious teachers will never scruple to withdraw themselves from their ministry, when it ceases to be acceptable to their capricious humour; and thus a door will be opened, for the introduction

[m] Judges xvii. 5.

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of every species of will-worship, until the faith once delivered to the saints is wholly lost, amidst the wild ravings of enthusiastic fancy, or the subtle refinements of an innovating philosophy.

To prevent this evil, to preserve and to extend the confession of the true faith, to do the work of the ministry, to perfect the Christian world in the knowledge and the practice of their duty, and to edify the Church, which is his body, did our Lord, at the first, "give some, apostles; and "some, prophets; and some, evangelists; "and some, pastors and teachers;" appointing unto each his peculiar office; that [n] "by the effectual working of every "part," all might be taught to "speak "the truth in love," and grow up by degrees [o] "unto the measure of the "sta- "ture of the fulness of Christ." But where the plan, which he in wisdom ordained for the government of his Church, is despised, and men vainly undertake to new model his kingdom; there will necessarily follow confusion, and every evil work:

[n] Ephes. iv. 16. 15. [o] Ephes. iv. 13.

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the Gospel will be at the mercy of every intruder, who fancies himself qualified to interpret it; and the unlearned and ignorant, who must necessarily constitute the larger portion of every community, whether civil or religious, will be [p] "as chil-
"dren, tossed to and fro, and carried about
"with every wind of doctrine, by the
"sleight of men, and cunning craftiness,
"whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

Far be it however from us to inculcate the necessity of a blind submission to infallible guides. The Church of England makes no pretence herself to such infallibility; she requires no such submission. Her priesthood is composed of men, who, far from presuming to lord it over God's heritage, are well aware that they also are compassed with infirmities; and, if they desire to be highly esteemed in love, of those whom they are appointed to teach, seek not this tribute as due to their personal merit or holiness, but for the sake of that work, to which they have been ordained.

[p] Ephes. iv. 14.

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But, though ready to confess that their treasure is committed to them [q] "in earthen "vessels," and that "the excellency of "the power is of God," and not of themselves, they know from whom they have received it: and while they deeply feel the awful responsibility under which they are bound to dispense it, for the edifying of those entrusted to their superintendance, they claim to be considered as the [r] "ambassadors of Christ." They desire to be obeyed no farther than their directions are founded upon the revealed word of God; but they fearlessly declare, that, within these limits, they have a legitimate authority, which no man can disregard or disobey, but at the fearful hazard of his displeasure from whom it is derived.

They therefore deem themselves empowered, nay bound, to [s] "reprove, rebuke, "and exhort," with all authority; to preserve, as far as in them lies, [t] "the faith "once delivered to the saints" in all its pri-

[q] 2 Cor. iv. 7. [r] 2 Cor. v. 20.
[s] 2 Tim. iv. 2. [t] Jude 3.

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mitive purity; to persuade their flocks to mutual love and to good works, to maintain [u] "the unity of the Spirit in the bond "of peace," and to dwell together as brethren, in the profession of one common religion, in the nourishment of one common hope, in dutiful obedience to those who have the rule over them, as commissioned by him, who alone is [x] "head over all "things to the Church," even Christ Jesus.

Considering themselves to be the appointed guardians of Christian unity, they must labour to support it; but while, in imitation of those, from whom their authority has been transmitted, they [y] "fight the good "fight of faith," as soldiers of Jesus Christ; it is to be hoped, that they will ever remember, that [z] "the weapons of their war-"fare are not carnal."

They are the ministers of him, who was not sent [a] "to destroy men's lives, but to "save them;" and therefore, although it behoves them patiently to argue with the

[u] Ephes. iv. 3. [x] Ephes. i. 22. [y] 1 Tim. vi. 12.
[z] 2 Cor. x. 4. [a] Luke ix. 56.

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doubting, firmly to remonstrate against error, and boldly to reprove the gainsayer and the blasphemer; still there is a point, beyond which they have no licence to proceed; and they who, unconvinced by their arguments, or uninfluenced by their exhortations, prefer to walk in the way which their own conscientious, though, as we believe, mistaken views of Christianity incline them to pursue, must be left to his judgment, who [b] "knoweth whereof we are "made, and considereth that we are but "dust."

The Church of England has herself been tried and purified by the fires of persecution; and her ministers have shewn, that they can patiently suffer for the truth, as well as resolutely defend it. But this is not the whole, perhaps not the chief of her praise: as she has been firm in adversity, so has she been tolerant and moderate in prosperity: she has not exalted herself proudly among her sister Churches; nor has she tyrannized over the lives and

[b] Psalm ciii. 14.

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and consciences of her own members. Contented with preaching and exhorting to unity, she has still preserved the spirit of charity to those whom her example could not persuade to embrace it: and while she laments the disunion which prevails, and sees with sorrow that the same spirit, which has separated some from her communion, has in like manner divided them in endless confusion against each other, she still preserves the language and the practice of the Prophet Samuel; and to all that her alienated children have objected against her, she has this answer to return, of unaltered moderation, of unextinguished love; [c] "God forbid that I "should sin against the Lord in ceasing "to pray for you: but I will shew you the "good and the right way. Only fear the "Lord, and serve him in truth with all "your heart: for consider how great things "he hath done for you." In the language of grateful exultation may she exclaim, [d] "The Lord hath done great things for us,

[c] 1 Sam. xii. 23. [d] Psalm cxxvi. 3.

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"whereof we are glad!" When, with the page of history open before us, we reflect upon the storms which have passed over her, upon the trials she has endured, and the deliverances she has received; and when we compare her present state with that of the Protestant communions whose reformation was coeval with her own; we cannot but confess, that the [e] "hand of the "Lord has been upon her for good." She has indeed been visited with affliction; but it has been for the trial and confirmation of her faith, and the increase of her glory. Not only has she been enabled to [f] "keep that which was committed to her "trust;" to preserve her scriptural doctrine, her holy worship, her episcopal constitution; but, while misery and unhappiness have prevailed around her, she has rejoiced in the temporal prosperity, as well as the spiritual edification, of her children.

Shall it then be said, that these things afford her no claim to the veneration and obedience of those, who have so long flou-

[e] Ezra viii. 22. [f] 1 Tim. vi. 20.

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rished under her protection? If she be denied the voice of authority, may she not be permitted to use [g] "the word of exhortation?" May she not intreat them, no longer to undervalue the blessings, which are placed within their reach; no longer to forsake that fold, which has been so signally defended? The question well deserves consideration. If the Church of England have continued faithful; if the [h] "law of truth "has been in her mouth;" and it has been her constant labour, to "turn many from "iniquity;" (and that such has been her conduct, presumptive proof, at least, is afforded by her preservation;) then may she hope, that her wandering children may yet be persuaded to see their error, and [i] "ask for the old paths, where is the "good way, that they may walk therein, "and find rest for their souls."

[g] Heb. xiii. 22. [h] Mal. ii. 6. [i] Jer. vi. 16.

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SERMON III.

EPHESIANS iv. 13.

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

AS the Apostle, in the preceding verse, had stated the necessity of a divinely appointed ministry, to promote the edification of the Church; so, in the present, he declares, that it is the object of their labours, to lead the Christian to perfection, while he adheres to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God: thus teaching us, that agreement in faith, or doctrine, is essential to that unity, which the priesthood, according to the plan laid down by an all-wise Providence for man's salvation, was to be the great instrument of promoting.

They who are not aware of the confi-

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dence with which propositions, almost self-evident, are sometimes questioned by the supporters of an opposite system, might suppose, that this would be universally admitted as a point incontestable; that there can no more be a multiplicity of true faiths, than there can be a plurality of true Gods.

Yet, while every sect and denomination of persons professing Christianity assents to the latter position, as one of the first elements of religious truth, the [a] former has not been considered as equally unexceptionable: and they who have assumed it as an axiom, and have built their arguments upon it, have been sometimes staggered and confounded, at finding a proposition, in their view of the subject so undeniable, boldly resisted.

This course of proceeding reduces us to the necessity of proving what might otherwise have been considered as granted; and instead of being satisfied with asserting, in the language of holy Writ, that as

[a] See Note XXXIV. Appendix.

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there is but "one Lord," so also there can be but "one faith;" we are called upon to demonstrate the connection of these two propositions; and to shew, that, if God be one, and his dealings with man one, which all Christians allow, then our faith must be one also[b].

By the term faith, we mean a firm belief in those peculiar and fundamental doctrines of our holy religion, which God has revealed to us in the Scriptures; doctrines which respect his nature, his counsels, and his operations. But we cannot otherwise conceive of God, than as a Being immutable and true; we must then allow, that it is impossible for him to have made contradictory declarations concerning his own nature, and that his purposes respecting man cannot have suffered change. If therefore it be admitted, that God has vouchsafed to man a revelation of his will, since this will can be but one, the words in which it is revealed must be intended to bear some precise and definite meaning,

[b] See Note XXXV. Appendix.

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discoverable by those who rightly study them; that this one will may be understood by all in the same manner: otherwise the Scriptures, which were professedly given to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, as far as their finite intellects are capable of receiving it, would impart no certain information even to the most diligent student. It may indeed happen, from various causes, that some will fail in their attempts to discover the genuine sense of Scripture, and that the same passages will sometimes be very differently interpreted; but two interpretations, thus differing, though they may both be erroneous, cannot both be right; for the real meaning must ever continue as unalterable, as is the character of that truth which it discloses. That a God of mercy will make all due allowances for mistakes, arising from unavoidable ignorance, or unconquerable prejudices, we must believe. But, while we trust that pardon will be vouchsafed to every unwilling deviation from

[c] See Note XXXVI. Appendix.

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the true standard, we are still bound to maintain, that such a standard has been set up; that there are some fundamental principles of doctrine, laid down in the Scriptures, for the information and direction of man; since no other view of the object of a divine revelation can be reconciled with the attributes of that Being, who can neither deceive us, nor be himself deceived.

This cursory view of the argument, from the immutability and truth of the divine nature, may perhaps satisfy the reflecting and impartial reasoner, that unity is an essential property of true Christian faith. But, as the question is of primary importance, and as prejudices have been entertained on the subject, which cannot be easily removed, it may not be useless to shew, First, that the Scriptures decidedly maintain this position; Secondly, that the Church, from the earliest ages, has acted upon a conviction of its truth; and, Thirdly, that the very nature of faith admits not of that variety, which some have considered to be compatible with its purity.

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I. We can obtain no higher proof of the necessity of faith, than that contained in the solemn commission given to the Apostles by our Saviour before his ascension; [d] "Go ye into all the world, and "preach the Gospel to every creature. He "that believeth and is baptized, shall be "saved; but he that believeth not, shall "be damned."

By the belief here required as a condition of salvation, it is evident that we are to understand, an assent to the truth of those particular doctrines, afterwards taught by the Apostles under the direction of the Holy Spirit; those doctrines, which St. Paul calls [e] "the whole counsel of God;" and which are commonly styled in Scripture, "the faith," because they form the distinguishing creed of a Christian. It can scarcely be doubted by any, that these holy men, all acting under the same divine influence, were of one mind as to the precepts they were commissioned to deliver; but should evidence of this fact also be re-

[d] Mark xvi. 15, 16. [e] Acts xx. 27.

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quired, it may be obtained from the language of St. Paul to the Corinthians. Reproving them for their divisions, and for their propensity to attach themselves to particular instructors, one crying, [f] "I am "of Paul," another, "I am of Apollos;" he says, "Who then is Paul, and who is "Apollos, but ministers by whom ye be- "lieved, even as the Lord gave to every "man?" Thus plainly inferring, that, whoever was their teacher, the doctrine must be the same; since they spake not of themselves, but as the servants of Jesus Christ, the Author of that faith which they preached.

If then it be allowed, that a belief of some fundamental truths, to be taught by the Apostles, was required by our Saviour as an indispensable condition of salvation; and that they, being all sent by the same Lord, and directed by the same Spirit, must have spoken the same things; it will follow, that [g] "the faith" means always one and the same system of doctrines;

[f] 1 Cor. iii. 4, 5. [g] See Note XXXVII. Appendix.

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which, although they are not to be found artificially arranged in the Scriptures, may be clearly understood and satisfactorily deduced from them, by careful examination; and when so deduced, are to be received as the substance of that teaching, which the Apostles delivered orally to their immediate disciples.

Thus when we are told, that, in consequence of a progress made by St. Paul and Timothy through the cities of Phrygia and Galatia, [h] "the churches were established "ed in the faith;" we shall understand by that term, the peculiar doctrines of that Gospel, which they preached. In his Epistle to the [i] Philippians, the same Apostle desires to hear of them, that "they stand "fast in one spirit, with one mind striving "together for the faith of the Gospel;" thus not only speaking of the Christian doctrine as a defined and known system, but declaring that they who would walk as becometh that Gospel, must adhere to it with unanimity. And instructing Timothy

[h] Acts xvi. 5. [i] Phil. i. 27.

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how to conduct himself in the episcopal office, he forewarns him, that [k] "in the lat-"ter days, some shall depart from *the* "*faith*;" and points out others to his no-tice, who, having been seduced by [l] "the "love of money, which is the root of all "evil, have erred from *the faith*;" that is, from the saving doctrines contained in the Gospel. In other places, the term is used in a sense somewhat more comprehensive, though still signifying that one code by which all Christians were to be bound. Thus we read, that Felix sent for St. Paul, and [m] "heard him concerning the faith in "Christ;" where "the faith" means, not only the distinguishing doctrines, but also the great moral precepts of the Gospel; for the Apostle, on this occasion, "rea-"soned of righteousness and temper-"ance," as well as of a "judgment to "come."

If then it be admitted, that what God has clearly revealed in the Scriptures is of necessity to be believed upon his testi-

[k] 1 Tim. iv. 1. [l] 1 Tim. vi. 10. [m] Acts xxiv. 24.

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mony, it will follow, that the doctrines, which make a part of this revelation, are to be accepted simply as they are revealed. The faith therefore, by which Christians are to be distinguished, and for which they are to strive, ought to be one and the same: for a reference to that Scripture, in which it is contained, proves that it is not a mere system of opinions, which every person is at liberty to frame for himself, by affixing that sense to the word of God, which may best suit his prejudices or his self-conceit; but a connected series of doctrines, taught by men, who [n] "spake "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and who could have had but one object, that of inducing all who heard them to believe, as they did, that the important truths which they were instructed to deliver came from God, and were to be accepted in singleness and sincerity of heart by all who sought his favour.

II. We have abundant evidence, that such has ever been the settled conviction

[n] 2 Pet. i. 21.

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of the Church; because, from the earliest days, some confession has been adopted by every branch of it, to which the several members of that branch have been required to adhere. The Scriptures, it is true, contain no regular formulary of faith; and the reasons why they do not must be obvious to every one, who knows the particular design with which each of the sacred books was written. But there is strong [o] ground for believing, that forms, in no essential particular differing from that now commonly received under the title of the Apostles' Creed, were used in the churches which they founded, and were sanctioned by their authority.

Many passages moreover, in the writings of the early Fathers, shew, that the fundamental articles of the Christian faith were, from the first, drawn out in regular order; for the purpose of establishing a rule, by which error might be distinguished from truth. [p] Ignatius, the companion of

[o] See Note XXXVIII. Appendix.

[p] See Note XXXIX. Appendix.

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the Apostles and the disciple of St. John, warning the Trallians against the Gnostic heresy, delivers a summary of the Scripture doctrine concerning our Saviour, and exhorts them to be deaf to all who do not teach it. [q] Irenæus recapitulates the articles of a creed, which he declares that the Church, wherever dispersed throughout the whole world, receives, maintains, and believes, as if it had but one heart and one soul; teaching and delivering it, as with one mouth. [r] Tertullian gives a similar rule of faith, as instituted by Christ; and asserts that no questions are raised against it, but those which heretics have introduced: and, in [s] another place, he declares of the same rule, that it is "altogether, "one, alone, immoveable, and unalter-"able."

Were it necessary to pursue the investigation farther, every one of the Fathers might be appealed to; for perhaps there is not any position on which their sentiments

[q] See Note XL. Appendix.
[r] See Note XLI. Appendix.
[s] See Note XLII. Appendix.

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will be found to be more unanimous than on this; that he who would be "perfect," or arrive unto "the measure of the stature "of the fulness of Christ," must hold the one true faith once delivered to the saints, and now preserved in the Scriptures.

But it is needless to dwell on individual testimony, when we may refer generally to all the Fathers of the first Nicene Council, the free, unbiassed representatives of the whole Christian Church. What, it may be asked, could have [t] summoned so many venerable bishops from their sacred charge; what could have induced so many learned and pious pastors to absent themselves from their flocks, and to journey even from the remotest parts of the then known world, to dignify this synod by their presence, and assist its deliberations by their collective wisdom, but a deeply rooted sense of the paramount duty of establishing the unity of the faith?

Had these holy men conceived that every Christian may frame his creed for

[t] See Note XLIII. Appendix.

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himself; that the God of truth and unity will not be displeased at the various and discordant opinions of his worshippers; or that any system of belief, supposed to be derived from the Scriptures, may be equally available to salvation, provided it be held in sincerity; neither the heresy of Arius, nor any other departure from the primitive doctrine, would have moved their indignation, or excited their fears. Far different were their sentiments respecting the nature of that faith to which salvation was promised; and the extent of their own duty, as its appointed guardians. The fearful woe denounced against those who believed not what the Apostles taught, was deeply impressed upon their hearts: they knew how solemnly they had been charged, to contend earnestly for the truth; and how tremendous would be their punishment, if they neglected to preserve the sacred deposit, as it had been delivered to them, whole and undefiled. And therefore, when the holy name of their Lord and their God was blasphemed, and a prophane attempt was made to rob

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him of his glory, and to reduce him to a level with the creatures whom he himself had formed; they cheerfully obeyed the call, which summoned them to bear public testimony to the apostolic doctrine, and to establish, by the universal consent of the Catholic Church, that uniformity of faith, by which true Christians must ever be distinguished. Here then we may safely rest; for higher evidence of the general sense of the Church cannot possibly be produced than that of this council; which has been justly [u] styled, by the learned and indefatigable defender of its confession, "the "most august and holy assembly ever "witnessed by the Christian world, since "the death of the Apostles."

III. It has however been contended, that a unity of faith cannot be necessary, because it is impossible to be obtained; that the mere natural difference of intellectual faculty, by which mankind is distinguished, will ever create differences of opinion; and that the attempts to make all men think alike on religious subjects,

[u] See Note XLIV. Appendix.

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is as hopeless, as to reduce their stature, their features, or their mental attainments, to one common standard. They who argue in this manner appear to mistake the question; and to have formed erroneous ideas, even of the nature of faith itself, as an [x] assent of the mind to the truth of a divine revelation. For, so considered, the very [y] nature of the evidence on which faith is built, and the character of the revelation which is proposed to its acceptance, seem to preclude that discussion, which might generate variety of sentiment. The truths which are its subject not being in themselves inferable from any data discoverable by man's natural faculties, there is no room for speculating upon them, as if they were the deductions of human reasoning. They are rendered credible, not as established by such species of argument, but as proved to be communicated by a Being of unerring wisdom. Wherever therefore the record containing them is acknowledged to be of divine original, there they ought to be re-

x See Note XLV. Appendix.
y See Note XLVI. Appendix.

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ceived in the precise sense in which the record delivers them; a sense to be deduced from the literal meaning and grammatical construction of its language, by the same process which enables us to understand the works of any secular author.

Something more than [z] opinion, grounded on mere abstract reasoning, was the foundation of St. Peter's steady adherence to his heavenly Master; when, for himself and his fellow Apostles, he declared, "We "believe and are sure, that thou art the "Christ, the Son of the living God:" something more than the result of mere human conjecture was also the faith exacted by Philip from the Eunuch, as the condition of his admission into the family of God; [a] "If thou believest with all thine "heart," said he, "thou mayest be bap-"tized." [b]

In these instances, no mere speculative opinion was required or professed; it was a firm and rooted conviction, that the fact was even as it was delivered. And he

[z] See Note XLVII. Appendix.

[a] John vi. 69. [b] Acts viii. 37.

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who remembers, that the faithful Christian does not believe the doctrines of his religion, because he barely supposes that they may be true, but because he is assured, upon the infallible testimony of God, that they are so, will allow, that, with respect to doctrines thus delivered and attested, all reasoning is irrelevant, which precludes a reference to that evidence on which they depend. Our Church accordingly declares, that [c] "nothing is to be required of any man, that it should be believed, as an article of the faith, which is "not read in Scripture, or may be proved "thereby." This she regards as the only testimony relative to divine things, which can demand that unreserved assent, and that [d] submission of the understanding, which are essential to faith. She calls upon her members to receive the three creeds she has adopted, not merely on account of their antiquity, nor even of their universal reception in the Church throughout so many ages; though both these circumstances may well

[c] Article VI. [d] See Note XLVIII. Appendix.

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entitle them to the veneration of every Christian; but because [c] "they may be "proved by most certain warrants of holy "Scripture."

It has been objected to this course of argument, that it inculcates a blind and implicit credulity, unworthy a being, to whom the Creator has given the faculty of reason as his director.

To this however it may be answered, that, although reason be competent to direct us in the affairs of this life, it is not; and [f] cannot be, without instruction from above, a sufficient guide in our religious concerns; for it cannot teach us to walk in a path which it is not able to discover: and since we never could have known the way which leadeth unto life, unless God had revealed it; revelation must first enlighten reason, to qualify it to be our conductor.

Hence the Apostle declares, that we [g] "walk by faith;" that is, our conduct, as Christians, is determined by our belief in those doctrines, which God has given us

[c] Article VIII.
[f] See Note XLIX. Appendix.
[g] 2 Cor. v. 7.

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for our direction. But, though we refuse to unenlightened reason that supremacy over faith which it has sometimes arrogantly claimed, we by no means exclude it from its proper office, in which it is eminently useful, and indeed absolutely necessary.

[h] Reason is employed in its own sphere, when it is exerted to try the evidence on which revelation is supported. It is competent to determine, whether the holy Scriptures have sufficient claim to be believed, as the compositions of men divinely inspired, and what particular doctrines they inculcate.

But when once reason itself has decided, that the Bible is the word of God; and that those fundamental doctrines, which the Church has uniformly maintained, are to be found in it; it then becomes *irrational* to say, that such doctrines may yet be made subjects of doubt as to their truth; or that they may be altered or rejected, in compliance with human notions of their probability or expediency.

[h] See Note L. Appendix. [i] See Note LI. Appendix.

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The same [k] reason which demands our assent to credible testimony, also proves the necessity of believing what it attests, according to the plain and natural meaning of the terms in which it is conveyed.

Since then the faith of a Christian is built upon the word of God himself, which is infallible, we conceive not how it can be otherwise than one. When facts are stated upon *human* authority only, if we have no reason to doubt the integrity or the knowledge of the relator, we do not hesitate to believe them to be as he has asserted; nor do we think ourselves justified in torturing his words, to impose upon them different senses. How then can they be defended, who deal thus with the language of a God of infinite wisdom and holiness? How can they suppose, that the words which the Holy Ghost has dictated, may be fairly made to bear any interpretation, which the perverted subtlety of man can impose on them; or that more than one faith can be built upon the same foundation?

[k] See Note LII. Appendix.

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The position then under consideration may now, I trust, be considered as sufficiently established. It has been tried by the rule of Scripture, and by the practice of the Church; and it has appeared, that as truth is one, so the faith of Christians must be one also; that this one faith is by the word of God declared to be an indispensable condition of salvation; and that in the primitive Church, which adhered to the instruction and the example of the Apostles themselves, it was constantly so regarded.

By investigating also the nature of faith, as an assent of the mind, upon the authority of divine revelation, to certain truths not discoverable by human inquiry; I have endeavoured to shew, that it is irreconcileable with the principles of sound reasoning to suppose, that this revelation can speak other than one and the same meaning to all who interpret it aright; or that we are at liberty to understand it in any sense but that which the manifest import of the language proves that it was intended to convey.

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The result then of the inquiry may be thus briefly stated: our blessed Lord has declared, that none but they who believe in him can be his disciples; and that all may know what they are to believe, he has left upon record with the Church the doctrines which she is to teach.

These doctrines are to be found in the holy Scriptures; whence they are to be gathered, not from a few dark or doubtful passages, but from the full, clear, and harmonious testimony of all the inspired writers; by each of whom, in his own method, varied according to the specific purpose of his labours, but still under the controlling influence of the same Spirit of truth, they have been stated, illustrated, and enforced. . . . . .

Taken together, these doctrines constitute that one faith, by which alone we can arrive unto "the perfect man, unto the "measure of the stature of the fulness of "Christ;" and therefore, he who does not [l] hold this [m] "form of sound words,"

[l] See Note LIII. Appendix. [m] 2 Tim. i. 13.

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as the Apostle calls it, constitutes a partaker in that fellowship, which connects him with Christians as a member of the same body, and with Christ as its head [n].

They who have perversely wandered from the true faith, have therefore ever been considered as destroyers of Christian unity. St. Paul indeed "declares, that [o] heresy may be made to serve a good purpose, as it affords an opportunity to true believers to shew their faith, by a steadfast opposition to it; but in another place he reckons it among those [p] "works of the "flesh," which may exclude a man from an inheritance in the kingdom of God; and he directs Titus to reject a heretic, after due admonition, considering him as one that [q] "is subverted, and sinneth, being "condemned of himself;" "that is," says the learned Hammond, "inflicting upon "himself that punishment, which the "Church is wont to do upon malefactors, "by cutting himself off from her commu- "nion."

[n] 1 Cor. xi. 19.
[o] See Note LIV. Appendix.
[p] Gal. v. 20.
[q] Tit. iii. 10, 11.

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The language of those who immediately succeeded the Apostles in the government of the Church, and who must be supposed to have been intimately acquainted with their sentiments and practice, may also be allowed to have considerable weight in determining this question: and they are unanimous in considering a departure from the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, as a breach of Christian unity; separating those who are guilty of it from the flock of Christ, and depriving them of the privileges of his covenant.[r]

It is indeed impossible to conceive, that real unity can exist without the one faith is preserved; and all attempts to promote it by stifling controversies, and concealing breaches which we cannot heal; by unwarrantable compromises, or mere external conciliation; will either wholly fail, or will produce, at best, a temporary union, by the permanent sacrifice of truth. The history of eighteen centuries has suffici-

[r] See Note LV. Appendix.
[s] See Note LVI. Appendix.

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ently proved to all who are inclined to learn wisdom from experience, that there can be no real concord among Christians, but that which is built, as the unanimity of the first converts at Jerusalem was, upon a stedfast adherence to the doctrine and fellowship of the Gospel.

Religion is a matter, too nearly and too deeply interesting, to be compatible with indifference. Where every thing which can awaken the feelings or influence the hopes of mankind is at stake, it will be ever difficult to prevent men from contending even about points of little moment; much more so, to temper a laudable zeal for doctrines of real importance with charity towards their opponents. Even where this is most perfectly done, unity must be lost, though charity be preserved. For though our detestation of heretical opinions be joined with pity for those who unfortunately hold them; though we be ready earnestly and sincerely to pray, that such persons may once more be brought home to the flock of Christ; until that desired event be accomplished, we cannot

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but regard them as straying from the fold, exposed to enemies whom they may be unable to encounter, and violating the integrity of the Christian Church. But if unmoved by these considerations, we seek to build up the breaches in the Church [t] "with untempered mortar;" and to make all men, of all persuasions, dwell together as the brethren of the Lord, by teaching that unity in fundamentals is not necessary; or by inducing the unwary to believe, that no doctrines which have been made the subjects of controversy are in themselves fundamental; open dissensions may for a time be prevented, and the voice of controversy may be heard no longer: but it is to be feared, that Christianity itself may perish with the contests, by which its truth has hitherto been maintained; and the silence which will follow, may be the silence of death. For they who are once taught that all modes of faith are equally right, will soon persuade themselves that none are necessary; and the useful, though

[t] Ezek. xiii. 10.

sometimes excessive, and often ill directed zeal, with which men have hitherto "striven together for the faith of the "Gospel," will be succeeded by the dull and heartless apathy of a deistical philosophy.

The language of our Saviour and his Apostles appears to warrant an opinion, that the latter days will be marked by the prevalence of infidelity. For the many intimations to be found in the New Testament, of a remarkable defection from the saving doctrines of the Gospel, which is to precede the great and terrible day of the Lord; although, in their primary signification, they may have referred to the falling away of the Jews, before the destruction of their city and temple; have been generally expected to receive their final accomplishment in a more extensive apostasy, by which the Church itself would be nearly brought to desolation. Various have been the events, to which these predictions have been supposed to

[u] Phil. i. 27.

relate. It was natural indeed, that pious and reflecting men, deeply impressed with the importance of those occurrences which they themselves witnessed, should have been led to imagine, that in each of the temporary triumphs of error or infidelity over revealed truth, they could trace the completion of prophecy. As years have rolled away, these several applications have, in their turn, been found in some respects unsatisfactory; and the predictions themselves, as yet unfulfilled, stand as beacons in the sacred pages, to warn us of the trials which await the Church; and to teach us, who "look for such things," to be diligent, that we at least "may be "found of him," whose speedy coming they will signify, "in peace, without spot "and blameless."[x]

The signs of the times have indeed been often misinterpreted, and the minds of some have been shaken and troubled without cause, as if "the day of Christ" was at hand.[y] But such mistakes affect

x 2 Pet. iii. 14. y Phil. i. 6.

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not the veracity of prophecy. The word of God standeth sure: and though we know not the day nor the hour, which he has appointed for the execution of his purposes; and all our conjectures and researches on the subject may end in disappointment; assuredly, whatever is written shall be accomplished in its season; and they, whose lot may fall to them in the latter days, will probably witness an apostasy, more general and more fatal than any which has yet afflicted the world. To this apostasy, neither the partial falling away of Judaizing Christians, nor the more extended corruptions of Romish superstition, nor even the atheistical frenzy, which was permitted for a season to be the scourge and disgrace of our own times, may be compared. So wide indeed will its influence be spread, that it is even made a question, whether, when "the "Son of Man cometh," he shall [z] "find "faith on the earth!" whether, among the multitudes of every nation and lan-

[z] Luke xviii. 8.

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guage, which profess to believe on his name, and to be zealous for his service, even a small remnant shall be left of those, who are truly his disciples! What then are the reflections, which the prospect of such a fearful departure from the truth should inspire? Should it not lead us seriously to consider, whether the prevailing spirit of our times may not favour the increase of error? whether they, who disregard that *unity* of faith, which the Scriptures require, and they, who neglect to enforce it, by argument, by persuasion, by intreaty, may not unintentionally cooperate, the one by their thoughtlessness, and the other by their silence, to hasten this predicted triumph of infidelity? The character of that apostasy, to which the Scriptures refer, is not precisely defined: but perhaps we shall not altogether err if we conceive, that it will not consist in an open denial of Christ; but rather in that strange diversity of opinions, that exaltation of imaginations above revealed truth, that moulding of the Scriptures after the fashion of human preju-

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dices, of which too many instances are daily forcing themselves upon our observation.

By those then, who are convinced that in the doctrines of the Church of England the true faith is now to be found, the path of duty can scarcely be mistaken. Taking their stand on that foundation on which she has built, they will be stedfast and immoveable: their firm and temperate resistance of plausible, but unauthorized novelties will prove, that they are faithful [a] "stewards of the mysteries of God:" and if it please him still to raise up those within her pale, who are thus prepared to defend and uphold her, the prediction of the Evangelical Prophet may yet be fulfilled in her favour, and the generations to come may [b] "see our Jerusalem a quiet "habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be "taken down; not one of the stakes "thereof shall ever be removed, neither "shall any of the cords thereof be bro"ken."

[a] 1 Cor. iv. 1. [b] Isai. xxxiii. 20.

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SERMON IV.

Acts ii. 42.

And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

SUCH is the account preserved in the sacred pages, of the practice of the Christian Church in its infant state; presenting a striking instance of that perfect unity, by which its earliest records are distinguished. It is humiliating to reflect how faint a resemblance we find, to this entire agreement in faith and worship, in succeeding ages. But the certainty that the Church has once been, what our Saviour intended it to be, will prove at least, that there is no physical impediment to the recurrence of such a blessed state of harmony and peace; while the example itself leads us to consider the conduct by which

alone that state can be restored. The time and the method of its restoration must be left to him, who alone can [a] "order the unruly wills and affections of "sinful men:" but the preparation for it we can, and we ought to make, by forming a clear idea of the essentials of that unity, which it is our duty to recommend; and by inculcating, each in our proper sphere and station, those arguments best calculated to enforce their observance.

The whole Church at this period consisted of little more than three thousand persons: of these, a small number had been companions of our Lord during the whole of his ministry; they had witnessed his exemplary holiness and his divine miracles, and been the attentive hearers of his heavenly doctrines: but the majority were recently converted; they were a portion of those [b] "devout Jews from every "nation under heaven," who, being assembled in Jerusalem at the day of Pentecost, had been so far affected by the mi-

[a] Litargy. [b] Acts ii. 5.

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miraculous descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, and its wonderful effects, as to be induced by St. Peter's sermon on that occasion to embrace the faith of a crucified Redeemer.

These, we are told, were baptized; and being thus made members of the Church, they proved the sincerity of their profession, and their due sense of the obligations which it entailed upon them, by adhering stedfastly to the one true doctrine taught by the Apostles; by continuing in their fellowship, or society; submitting to the discipline and government established by them; and by partaking in the same religious ordinances and modes of worship, in "breaking of bread, and in prayers."

A due provision for the maintenance of Christian unity thus appears to have been coeval with the establishment of the Church itself. As the Apostles permitted no other system of association to prevail among their converts, we may consider this to be a strong proof of their conviction, that the brethren in Christ could never dwell together as brethren ought, on any other terms:

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and we may conceive it to have been not unintentional, on the part of the inspired historian, that the very first mention, which occurs in his narrative, of Christians as a connected body, should be accompanied by a clear indication of the principles of their union. Thus did the original Church become a model for all which succeeded it, and the steady continuance of its members in the doctrine and discipline of the Apostles, in the sacraments which their divine Master had ordained, and in a common form of devotion, stands upon record in the sacred volume, as if designed to teach us, that the disciples of Jesus Christ were to be separated from the world of the unbelievers; and that by these characteristic practices, each a pledge of mutual good offices, they were ever after to be united, as by an inviolable bond of affection.

In prosecution of the plan originally laid down, I have already considered Christian unity, as it should be exemplified in submission to the form of Church government established by the Apostles; and in the

maintenance of the one true faith, which they were commissioned to teach. I am now to examine, how far agreement in modes of worship is essential to its preservation.

It was to be expected, that he, who prayed so earnestly that his disciples might be one, would ordain some external rites or ceremonies, significant of their profession, their expectations, their high calling, and their solemn obligations; constituting a bond of union to themselves, as well as an outward sign of that union to others. For what can operate more strongly to preserve a religious association, than a common participation in some simple and affecting offices of devotion; which, unalterable in their signification, may remind the individuals of whom this association is composed, that they are all sharers in the same hopes and privileges, bound to the performance of the same duties, and thus distinguished from those around them? These, as ordinances of universal obligation, in every age and every country, were

See Note LVII. Appendix.

necessarily few and simple; but they were sufficient to instruct the household of faith, that all its members, however dispersed throughout the world, were travelling in the same road, and equipped in the same manner for their journey; that they must meet hereafter before one tribunal, and might live together in the eternal enjoyment of bliss and glory. These great objects thus secured, the daily wants and duties of each, the mode of keeping up in the minds of all a due sense of their holy profession, and of rendering the continual sacrifice of associated praise to him, who had "called them in one body," were left to be provided for by particular churches, as the circumstances of their members might seem to require. Thus, to the ordinances immediately of divine institution, by partaking in which every Christian was awakened to a sense of his fellowship with the whole society of believers, were added also others of human appointment; and these, as well as the former, were binding upon the conscience, because

[d] Col. iii. 15.

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enjoined by that authority, to establish laws for its own preservation, and rules for the orderly conduct of its proceedings, which is essential to the existence of every society, civil or religious.

Of both these kinds of institutions the chapter before us gives an instance. It tells us, that those who joined themselves to the Apostles were baptized; and that being thus admitted unto "their fellowship," they continued stedfastly in breaking of "bread, and in prayers;" not only in a conformity to that mode of worship, appointed for their own particular Church; but also in partaking of that most holy mystery, here called "the breaking of "bread," by which all Christians were to be especially distinguished. In considering, then, that particular branch of Christian unity, which the latter part of the text so clearly marks out, our inquiry will necessarily divide itself into two heads. We may first examine the duty of conforming to the particular ritual of that Church, to which we may happen to belong: and, secondly, that agreement in the great dis-

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tinguishing features of Christian worship, which forms a visible bond of union, connecting all Churches throughout the world.

I. It has been already shewn, that the Church is a society constituted by God himself, that the true faith may be preserved, and the edification of its members duly provided for: and hence it follows, that, a [e] power must be vested in the rulers of this society, to decree rites and ceremonies for the decent regulation of its public proceedings; since, otherwise, these important objects could not be attained.

The authority, thus inherent in the Church, has however its limits; it extends not to the enactment of any thing [f] "contrary to God's word written;" for that word is the depository of his will, and must be the rule of their conduct, who govern in his name. When this limit is not exceeded; when the Church cannot be justly charged with enjoining superstitious, profane, or antichristian rites or ceremonies; her members are [g] bound to conform to the

[e] See Note LVIII. Appendix. [f] Article XX.
[g] See Note LIX. Appendix.

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rules she lays down for their observance; and every wilful and systematic departure from them [h] involves a breach of Christian unity.

Such then being the legitimate authority of the Church, it is our first object to inquire, whether it can be an undue exercise of that authority to frame liturgies for the use of her communion; for it is chiefly in this particular that her power has been questioned.

[i] Public worship undoubtedly forms an essential part of a Christian's duty; and it is one of the great means of his edification, which, we have already seen, the Church is bound to promote. It is also assumed as unquestionable, that it belongs to the priesthood only to minister unto the people in things pertaining to God; to speak to them in the public assembly, as well as to admonish them in private, as [k] "ambassadors for Christ;" and to present their united supplications and thanksgivings in his name before the throne of his Father.

[h] See Note LX. Appendix.

[i] See Note LXI. Appendix.

[k] 2 Cor. v. 20.

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If, then, public worship be necessary; and if in that worship it be the office of the priest to offer up the prayers of the congregation; it will be difficult to shew, that this can be effectually done, but by the use of some form, generally known, understood, and observed: for thus only can the hearts and wishes of the assembled worshippers be all directed towards the same object; or the words which are uttered by the minister be properly called *their* prayers as well as his own.

Astonishment or admiration may indeed be excited by the eloquence or fervour of an extemporaneous effusion; but astonishment and admiration are not devotion: far from it; they call the mind from heaven to earth, and fix its attention upon the conduct and attainments of a fallible mortal, instead of carrying it up in humble adoration to the footstool of that Almighty God and Saviour, in whose service it ought to be engaged.

The [1] legitimate objects of all religious worship may be reduced to two; the glory

[1] See Note LXII. Appendix.

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of God, and the supply, either of our own wants, or those of others, for whom we are bound to pray. But he who is really desirous of rendering due honour unto the Lord his God, will take care to pay that necessary tribute in the manner which God has appointed; and as he is taught by an Apostle, that Christians should [m] "glorify God with one mind and one "mouth," he will be convinced that the praises of a public congregation can never be acceptable in his sight, unless they are thus offered. In like manner, as our [n] Saviour has graciously promised that where his worshippers [o] agree in their petitions, his heavenly Father will hear and grant them; no faithful Christian will think it a matter of indifference, whether a mode of public worship be adopted, which renders that [p] agreement almost impossible, or whether the most effectual means be taken for its preservation. On the contrary, he will consider, that the conditions of this

[m] Rom. xv. 6.
[n] Matt. xviii. 19.
[o] See Note LXIII. Appendix.
[p] See Note LXIV. Appendix.

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promise furnish an argument in favour of an established liturgy, which no man, who values the favour of God, can lightly disregard.

Such have been the grounds, on which they who have argued *a priori*, from the necessity of the case, have maintained, that the Church, in enjoining the use of a common form of prayer, has not exceeded the authority vested in her, for the spiritual benefit and edification of her members. Admitting, however, for the present, that such arguments prove only the expediency of a liturgical service; let us proceed to inquire, what further testimony can be produced of its lawfulness.

The ritual of the Jewish Church furnishes us with evidence, that forms, as such, far from being displeasing to God, have been sanctioned by him in one instance at least, as best calculated to promote the object of public worship. And though the service of the temple, accommodated only to the peculiar circumstances of the Jewish nation, was of necessity abolished, when the purpose was accomplished for

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which it was ordained; yet it by no means follows, that therefore all forms and ceremonies became from that time unlawful; or that the Christian Church was to have no ritual at all, because the Jewish law of ceremonies was done away, as inapplicable to the circumstances of this new covenant.

A very different conclusion may with propriety be drawn from the declaration of the Apostle, that [q] "we have an altar, "whereof they have no right to eat, who "serve the tabernacle;" for in this [r] passage, the commemorative sacrifice of the Christian is expressly opposed to the typical offerings of the Jew; and the Hebrews are taught to look from the ritual, which they were henceforward to renounce, to that new and spiritual service, that continual sacrifice of praise, to be offered unto God by Jesus, the great High Priest of their new profession. We have also direct proof, that our Saviour thought it right to anticipate the wants of his Church, by [s] composing a prayer for his disciples; not

[q] Heb. xiii. 10. [r] See Note LXV. Appendix.
[s] See Note LXVI. Appendix.

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only that it might form a part of all their devotions, both public and private; but that it might serve as a model by which their other common petitions were to be framed: and as if to sanction as highly as possible the use of common forms, he constantly attended the public worship of the temple and the synagogue; and himself used the hymns of the Jewish ritual, on a remarkable [t] occasion, in his private devotions with his disciples. We know also how strongly he recommended associated worship, declaring, that he would honour the assemblies of Christians with his [u] especial presence; and we have already adverted to the blessing which he taught *them* to expect, who on such occasions offered up to him with one accord their associated supplications.

Although therefore it may be admitted, that no [x] formal and positive statute can be produced from the Scriptures, directing the Church to provide a form of prayer, or to ordain any other rite or ceremony; this

[t] Matt. xxvi. 30. [u] Matt. xviii. 20.

[x] See Note LXVII. Appendix.

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silence cannot be allowed to counterbalance the indirect, but powerful evidence which they contain, that she both possessed and exercised this power from the first; it rather proves, that it was judged superfluous formally to vest her with a privilege so clearly inherent in the very nature of a spiritual society. Nor does the general usage of the inspired writers teach us to expect this direct evidence; the fact was sufficiently notorious; and it was unnecessary to declare the lawfulness or expediency of that, which their own constant practice sufficiently justified.

When we find St. Paul giving the Corinthians so many rules for the regular performance of public worship; [y] providing so carefully that all things should be done for [z] "the use of edifying;" that no prayers or thanksgivings should be offered, but such as the unlearned might understand and partake in; that every thing should be [a] "done decently and in order," with a due subordination, not only of the dis-

y See Note LXVIII. Appendix.
z Ephes. iv. 29. a 1 Cor. xiv.

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ciple to his teacher, but of the ministers also to each other, according to their rank; and this, because [b] "God is not the au- "thor of confusion, but of peace;" we can no longer hesitate to acknowledge, that the authority claimed by the Church, to regulate and direct the public worship of her members by some settled form, is no more than the sure word of Scripture, and the practice of the Apostolic Church at Corinth, fully confirms.

If, by continuing the inquiry, we discover, that forms of prayer were in early and universal use among Christians; this will add greatly to the weight of testimony in favour of their lawfulness, as well as their expediency. The fact then may be traced in the writings of Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, and Cyprian; all of whom speak of particular forms used in their times in different churches. We have also very ancient liturgies yet preserved; which, although they have descended to us in a corrupted state, and

[b] See Note LXIX. Appendix.
[c] See Note LXX. Appendix.

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were certainly not composed by the holy Apostles, whose names they bear, may with great probability be considered as productions of the apostolic age, and as founded, in some degree, upon the prayers used by these holy men, or by those whom they appointed their successors. It may readily be believed, that, while experience proved the necessity of an established form, the veneration in which the first inspired teachers of the Gospel were held would induce every Church to frame its liturgy, as nearly as possible, upon the model of the prayers which they had used during their personal ministry; and as the resemblance must have been notorious, it would stamp the form which bore it with a peculiar value. But, whether we attribute the names, by which these liturgies were afterwards distinguished, to such a traditionary resemblance, or not; still the [d] fact with which we are chiefly concerned is unimpeachable; namely, that the use of public forms may be traced to

[d] See Note LXXI. Appendix.

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the earliest age of the Church. Upon no other principle indeed can we account for their evident universality in after times. No ingenuity of reasoning can render it credible, that the whole Church, or any particular branch of it, should at once have departed from the primitive mode of public worship, and endeavoured to bind its members to the use of a common liturgy; and that such an innovation should have met with no resistance, but have been so quietly and universally submitted to, that it is now impossible to trace even the period of its introduction.

The history of the Church abundantly proves, that zealous and faithful men were always to be found in it, who would strenuously have opposed such an unauthorized deviation from its godly discipline, had it been attempted: nor can it be believed, that, while some documents remain of every other controversy, which disturbed the peace of Christianity; while the remembrance of every heresy is preserved, in the works of its author, or the answers of his opponents; while every schismatical

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aberration from established discipline has been faithfully recorded; this great and momentous change should have been passed over in silence. Until then it can be shewn, that the primitive churches used *no* liturgies; that they were altogether the invention of a later age, and were then publicly protested against, as an unlawful innovation; we must be allowed to consider the universal practice of so many centuries as affording sufficient proof, not only that the authority which originally imposed them was unquestionable, but that the wisdom and necessity of the appointment was manifest.[e]

If then the power and authority of the Church to ordain rites and ceremonies cannot be disproved, it must be the duty of all her members to conform to her constitutions. Nothing short of clear and positive evidence, that this power has been illegally exercised; that the public service of a particular Church is profaned by superstitious or idolatrous practices; or that

[e] See Note LXXII. Appendix.

forms and ceremonies have been introduced into it, manifestly repugnant to the doctrines of Christianity, and incompatible with the duties which it enjoins, can justify a departure from them. And every departure admitting not of such an apology, is a [f] breach of Christian unity; which can only be maintained, when the members of the Church, in strict imitation of that primitive society spoken of in the text, "continue stedfastly," not only in her apostolic "doctrine," but also in her "fellowship" and in her "prayers."

II. As each particular Church has the power of appointing its own ritual, which its members cannot disregard without a breach of unity; so are there certain ordinances of public worship, to which all Christians and every Church are equally bound to conform, because they are of divine institution and perpetual obligation.

The Church, being a society chosen out of the world, was to be distinguished from

[f] See Note LXXIII. Appendix.

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it by some external ceremonies peculiar to itself; which might closely [s]unite its members, however locally separated, and might become a sign and seal of that faith and those privileges, by which they were to be known from the rest of mankind. Such are the two sacraments; which, whether we consider their origin or their object, will appear to be equally binding upon all Christians of every age: for they were instituted by our Saviour himself; the one, as the gate of admission unto the covenanted privileges of his spiritual kingdom; the other, as a perpetual memorial of the death he suffered for us, and of the benefits resulting to us from that sacrifice.

Who then can read our Saviour's solemn declaration to Nicodemus, that, [h]"except a man be born of water and of "the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," and conceive himself at liberty to reject the sacrament of baptism? Or who can profess himself a believer in the propitiatory sacrifice offered

[s] See Note LXXIV. Appendix. [h] John iii. 5.

by Jesus Christ upon the cross for the sins of man, and refuse to celebrate and shew forth this death, by the simple, yet significant mode of commemoration, which he has appointed?

Even, then, if baptism were a mere rite of admission into the Christian Church, and the Lord's Supper no more than a commemoration of our Saviour's death; the certainty that He himself commanded us to observe them, would sufficiently bind them upon all who call themselves Christians. But they are much more; they are sacraments; outward and visible signs, of inward grace bestowed upon us, they are at once the means of procuring it, and pledges granted by God himself to assure us of its reception. The baptized Christian is a different being from the unbaptized heathen: the one possesses faculties and affections, privileges and expectations, to which the other is of necessity a stranger: by baptism, he is, as the Church expresses it, made "a member of Christ, a "child of God, an inheritor of the king-"dom of heaven;" and, as such, a new

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principle is implanted within him, by which he is rendered capable of cultivating the desires, and performing the duties, indispensable in all, who are admitted into this new and spiritual state.

Such then being the benefits conferred in baptism, it cannot be doubted, that the sacrament, which admits us into the family of God, and gives us a share in the privileges set apart for his household, must also be essential to Christian unity: for it cannot well be conceived, that he can be one with the Church, which is composed of God's children, who has no part nor lot in their adoption and inheritance; and is incapable of performing the duties, expected from them, having never [i] partaken in that spiritual regeneration, by which the new man is raised up in the human heart, and power is given to the fallen sons of Adam to triumph over the enemies of his salvation. While, however, we thus lay down the scriptural rule with that precision which becomes the stewards

[i] See Note LXXV. Appendix.

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of God's mysteries; still we speak as men, commissioned plainly to declare the counsel of God, but by no means affirming more, respecting any part of the divine plan of redemption by Jesus Christ, than has been clearly revealed. We presume not to say, that no possible case can be imagined, in which God may dispense with his own ordinances; but such and so decided is the language of Scripture respecting the nature and the efficacy of baptism, as the appointed means of admission into that state of salvation, in which every member of Christ's Church is or has been placed; and as the channel through which the ordinary gifts of the Spirit are bestowed, to enable us to perform the duties of our Christian calling; that the want of it can be excused by nothing but an insuperable necessity. Of that necessity, be it remembered that God will be the judge, and not man. To him therefore we should be satisfied to leave the case of those, who unhappily have not participated in this sacrament; asserting only, in the moderate and well

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weighed language of our own excellent Church, that [k] "baptism is *generally* ne- "cessary to salvation."

If the sacrament of baptism be essential to Christian unity, because it is the appointed means of admission to that community of hopes and privileges, which binds Christians together; the sacrament of the eucharist is so to be considered, because it is the instituted mode of confirming these hopes, and preserving to us the enjoyment of these privileges; because it is, moreover, the service by which Christ himself has commanded us to express our sense of them; to seek a continuance of them; and solemnly to devote ourselves, our souls and bodies, to the performance of those duties, both towards God and man, on which our final salvation is made to depend.

There is perhaps no particular, in which the sentiments of Christians have suffered so melancholy, so humiliating a change, as in their reverence for this holy sacra-

[k] See Note LXXVI. Appendix.

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ment, and their sense of its necessity. Among the first recorded practices of the Christian Church, we find this, that its members "continued stedfast in breaking "of bread." During the lives of the Apostles, so full and deep was the conviction of its importance and obligation, that we have no account of an assembly for the purpose of devotion, where the Lord's Supper was not celebrated. For many ages after, it continued the distinctive mark of the Christian profession; that high and awful mystery, by which the disciples were separated unto God, as [l] a "peculiar people, an holy nation." Their ordinary services, their prayers, and their sermons, were accessible to all; the infidel, as well as the believer, was invited to come, and listen to the word of God; he was permitted to witness the pure worship of prayer and praise, which they offered; and, if he pleased, to join in its celebration. But from the table of the Lord, all were [m] excluded, but the faithful.

[l] 1 Pet. ii. 9. [m] See Note LXXVII. Appendix.

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Not only was no heathen allowed to be present at this great solemnity, but even Christians themselves, unless they "adorned the doctrine of God their Sa-"viour," by the purity of their lives and conversation, were not admitted to taste of the heavenly banquet! And let it be observed, that, while the denial of this holy sacrament was judged the [o] greatest temporal punishment, which the Church had power to inflict, even on the most notorious sinner; so highly, may we not add so properly, were its benefits appreciated, that no other was found necessary.

The contrast between modern neglect and those times of primitive discipline, is too painful to dwell upon: it is our lot to live in times, when, partly it may be allowed from wanton and unjust assertion of ecclesiastical power, in an age of darkness and usurpation; but more from that overweening spirit of independence, which grew out of successful opposition to it; the censures of the Church have lost all

[n] Titus ii. 10.

[o] See Note LXXVIII. Appendix.

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their efficacy: and so far has this holy sacrament sunk in estimation, that many who call themselves Christians, and profess to be in unity with the Church, wilfully abstain from the Lord's table, and thus cut themselves off from one of the greatest of their spiritual privileges.

Some, doubtless, fall into this grievous error through mistaken, though reverent views of the eucharist itself, or of the proper preparation for receiving it: but many, very many, especially among those whose superior education and attainments would lead us to expect better things from them, are found to neglect this most important benefit of their Christian calling, for no other reason, than that they have never seriously thought of its nature or its value. If however that Church which was founded by the Apostles, which grew up under their especial superintendance, and enjoyed the advantage of their example, may be considered as a model, by which we are to [illegible] build up ourselves on

[p] See Note LXXIX. Appendix. [q] Jude 20.

"our most holy faith;" then we must "continue stedfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

But if not; if Christianity has changed its character, and some new lights have sprung up in these latter days, which shew that the precepts of the Gospel are no longer obligatory; that the practice of Christ's immediate disciples is no rule for our conduct; and that his most solemn institutions may be safely neglected, or despised, by those who call themselves members of his body, and heirs of his kingdom; then may unity of prayers, or sacraments, of doctrine or of discipline, be alike disregarded as antiquated and obsolete observances, in which we have neither interest nor concern. Such opinions, so utterly irreconcileable with every idea of Christian association and duty inculcated by the Scriptures, require no refutation: to state them plainly, is to shew their deformity and their danger. But between them and conformity to the practice stated in the text, there can be

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no alternative. If men may not worship God according to the dictates of their own vain imaginations, where shall they look for direction, but to his revealed word? or what purer example can they propose to themselves, than that of the Church which the Apostles in person ruled? In the Scriptures they will find evidence sufficiently strong to satisfy all who will impartially weigh it, that the Church has a power, inherent in herself, to make the necessary provisions for the decent and orderly celebration of her public service; and that, independent of all such regulations, which, as they may be varied according to the circumstances and situation of each particular branch of it, are binding only upon the members of that branch; there are divine offices, even the two sacraments, appointed by Christ himself, and therefore of perpetual and universal obligation.

No society of Christians can set these aside, without forfeiting its title to be esteemed a part of the body of Christ; no Christian can neglect them, without vir-

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tually cutting himself off from the communion of saints, and hazarding his eternal salvation. If from the state of public confusion and disorder, of individual peril and uncertainty, consequent upon such an unauthorized deviation from the rule of Scripture, and the practice of the first disciples, as recorded by the Evangelist for our instruction, we turn to the consideration of that unity of devotion, recommended by the text, and enforced by the discipline of our own Church; how fair, how lovely is the prospect!

If any spectacle can give us an idea of heavenly occupations and delights in this our mortal state, it must be that of a Christian congregation, prostrate before the footstool of the same God; and joining with one heart and one soul in the same fervent and devout expressions of faith, of hope, of gratitude, of reverence, of obedience.

When then the mind is carried on from a single congregation thus employed to the idea, that the whole national Church is at the same time engaged in hallowing the

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Christian sabbath by one common act of devotion; striving together in prayer; and pouring forth from every town and every village the same voice of supplication, praise, and thanksgiving, in his name who is the Saviour of all, can we doubt the prevailing efficacy of such an offering, when sincerely made? or can we imagine a closer resemblance to the conduct of that heavenly assembly, which [s] "serveth "God day and night" continually!

When to this we add, that every member of the Church has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and received into the number of God's faithful and elect children by baptism; what shall we require to complete the picture, but that they, who thus have been admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion; who thus abide in the doctrine, and join in the prayers of that Church, which may justly claim to be [t] "built upon the foundation of the Apo-"stles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself "being the chief corner stone;" should

[r] See Note LXXX. Appendix.
[s] Rev. vii. 15.
[t] Ephes. ii. 20.

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also "continue stedfast," in the great leading characteristic of true Christian worship, "the breaking of bread!"

Thus connected by every external bond of unity, and "going up with the multitude to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise," it might be hoped, that the Spirit of Peace, of which they would then be made partakers, would also dwell in their hearts, and accompanying them into the world, and directing them in their daily conversation, as well as in their religious services, would induce them to "follow peace with all men;" and to prove that they were the faithful disciples of him "who loved us, and gave himself for us," by the love which they uniformly manifested one towards another.

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[u] Psalm xlii. 4. [x] Heb. xii. 14. [y] Gal. ii. 20.

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SERMON V.

1 Cor. iii. 3.

Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

WHEN the present distracted state of the Christian world is compared with the harmony and union which prevailed in the infant Church at Jerusalem, as described by the Evangelist; so lamentable a departure from primitive excellence cannot but excite sensations of humiliation and sorrow in the mind of every man, who is zealous for the honour of his religion, and well instructed in the duties of its professors.

Little consolation will such a person derive from knowing, that the divisions which now harass the Church are not peculiar to the present day. For he will perceive that their danger is not less alarming, nor

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their guilt less deadly, because we have inherited them from our forefathers, or can discover the injurious operations of their influence in almost every page of ecclesiastical history. The language of the Apostle in the text shews indeed, that the evil had begun to work even in his days; but it proves also, to the confusion of the present generation, that it was then universally known, deplored, and censured as an evil: men were not accustomed to * regard it with indifference; it had not so far insinuated itself into the very vitals of Christianity, as to render the remedy, by which alone it could be counteracted, as intolerable as the disease; nor were there to be found any so hardy or so blind, as to deny the mischief of disunion, or to maintain, that religious discord is not unpleasing in the sight of God. Still however it will be useful to trace these divisions to their source; for such an investigation will at least empower us to attach the guilt of producing them where it ought to be fixed;

* See Note LXXXI. Appendix.

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and to shew that the contests and animosities, which have disturbed the Church, are not to be rashly attributed to the misconduct of its ministers, much less to any inherent defects in our holy faith itself; but rather to the perversity of that nature, which it was intended to reform.

The first breach of unity upon record took place in the church at Corinth, when under the immediate superintendance of St. Paul, whose authority was in vain exerted to repair it; for though he succeeded in restoring a temporary harmony, the epistles written by Clement to the same Church, not long after the martyrdom of that Apostle, bear testimony to the dissensions by which it still continued to be agitated. Hence then it is manifest, that schism and contention may disturb a church, although no possible charge of deficiency, either in zeal or ability, can be brought against its ministers.

Where the Apostles themselves officiated, there could have been no pretence for such

[b] See Note LXXXII. Appendix.

an accusation: their doctrine could not have differed in essential points; none of them could have been wanting in diligent attention to the laborious duties of their important office; and the Holy Spirit vouchsafed to all the same confirmation of their mission, by granting [c] "signs and "wonders to be done by their hands." Yet the Corinthians formed into parties, and affected to class themselves under different teachers; forgetting that they had all been called into the fellowship of Jesus Christ; and that, as brethren, it became them to be [d] "perfectly joined together in "the same mind, and in the same judg-"ment."

It requires then little argument to prove, that the original causes of disunion are not to be found in the nature of Christianity itself, nor to be charged upon the frailties or defects of its teachers. As God is love, and willeth that his disciples should love one another, his precepts must tend to promote the harmony in which he delights:

[c] Acts xiv. 3. [d] 1 Cor. i. 10.

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and though the ministers of Christ will never be wholly exempt from the infirmities of their brethren; their personal defects cannot justify rebellion against the authority, by which they are appointed; nor can the spirit of disorder and contention, which manifested itself even under the rule of the Apostles, be justly imputed to the [c] weaknesses or errors of their uninspired successors. As if however to remove all ground for such an imputation, and to vindicate those who were to follow him and his fellow-labourers in their sacred office from being undeservedly censured, as the authors of an evil, which the predictions of his blessed Master had taught him to consider as inevitable; St. Paul takes occasion in the text to fix upon the Corinthians themselves the guilt of that sin, which, in the discharge of his apostolic office, it became him to reprove. "Whereas there "is among you envying, and strife, and "divisions, are ye not carnal?" Your contests, far from being a consequence of

[c] See Note LXXXIII. Appendix.

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your conversion to Christianity, are a convincing proof, that ye are yet in great measure strangers to its influence; that ye submit to be directed by carnal impulses, instead of yielding yourselves as servants to Jesus Christ, and obeying the suggestions of his Holy Spirit. Whether such is the true import of these words, "ye are car-"nal," will best be determined by the context. The Apostle tells them, that he cannot yet declare unto them the whole mystery of the doctrine of Christ, nor speak unto them in the language, which, as a minister of Christ, he wished to employ, because they were unable to bear it; not having wholly [f] laid aside those evil propensities of a depraved nature, which were to be exchanged for humility, peaceableness, and docility, before their minds could be competent to the admission and comprehension of divine truth. He therefore compares them to "babes," who are "fed "with milk," because they cannot digest the food of men; thus giving them to un-

[f] See Note LXXXIV. Appendix.

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derstand, that what they had hitherto learned from him were but the first [g] rudiments of Christian knowledge; simple elements, adapted to the intellect of children, and preparatory only to that more full and perfect information, which was reserved for those who had ears to hear and hearts to receive the treasures of heavenly wisdom.

"I, brethren, could not speak unto you "as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, "even as unto babes in Christ. I have "fed you with milk, and not with meat: "for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, "neither yet now are ye able. For ye are "yet carnal." By telling them then that they "are carnal," may we not conceive him to mean, that they had but imperfectly adopted the Christian character; that they were more under the rule of those [h] passions, which sway the natural man, than was consistent with the spirit of the [i] religion they now professed?

The Apostle has still further explained

[g] See Note LXXXV. Appendix.
[h] See Note LXXXVI. Appendix.
[i] See Note LXXXVII. Appendix.

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his meaning by observing, that their divisions are a sign that they [k] "walk as men;" that is, after the manner of men, and not as Christians ought to walk; following the example of the heathen philosophers, who arranged themselves in sects, and assumed the names of their respective teachers, as party distinctions; instead of submitting with humility to one common head, and regarding the ministers set over them only as instruments in his hand, who was the Author of their faith, and alone entitled to their obedience.

It appears then that St. Paul, far from considering the maintenance of different religious opinions, or the formation of separate societies under teachers of their own selection, to be practices in which Christians had a natural and unalienable right to indulge, regarded the tendency to such conduct, which he observed in the Corinthians, as a proof that they were not wholly [l] "renewed in the spirit of their "minds." Christianity, he argued, was a

[k] See Note LXXXVIII. Appendix. [l] Eph. iv. 23.

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religion of unity and peace; and "envying, strife, and divisions" could only prevail among those who were yet "babes in "Christ," but partially acquainted with the doctrines they had embraced, and little conversant in its duties. If then such evils are to be attributed to the prevalence of a carnal spirit over the influence of our holy faith; it will follow, that the sources of disunion are to be sought in those characteristic propensities of our nature, which it is the object of the Gospel to rectify or restrain; we must inquire into the motives by which men, as men, are engaged to resist authority, and to contend with one another; and then we shall have discovered the causes of every struggle, and every separation, which has hitherto disgraced the name and diminished the benefits of Christianity.

Solomon, whose intimate acquaintance with the human heart will not be disputed, assures us, that [m] "only by pride cometh "contention;" and in confirmation of his

[m] Prov. xiii. 10.

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assertion it will be found, that every rebellious opposition to lawful authority in religious matters; every instance of debate, of strife, or of schism recorded in the Scriptures, may be traced to the uncontrolled indulgence of this passion. The first blood spilt upon the earth stained the hand of one, who, having set up his own judgment and his own wisdom as the rule by which he was to serve God, presumed thus to assert his right to alter the divinely instituted worship of his Maker. And did the present occasion allow us to investigate the circumstances attending this earliest effect of the depravity entailed by the sin of Adam upon his posterity, it would not be difficult to shew, that pride sowed the seeds of dissension, and finally raised the arm of the murderer against his brother's life.

The Apostle St. Jude, when dehorting Christians from the evil and the guilt of rebellion against lawful authority in the Church, mentions also another model,

[n] See Note LXXXIX. Appendix.

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which such violators of Christian unity appeared to him to have adopted. [o] "They "have gone in the way of Cain," says he, "and perished in the gainsaying of Core." The origin of [p] Corah's rebellion was evidently pride. He could not submit to that subordination of ranks in the Jewish church which God had established. In his eyes, all the congregation was equally holy; and therefore he and his company were as much entitled to bear rule as Moses and Aaron. In their own estimation, they had the necessary personal qualifications for spiritual authority; and they presumed that these qualifications were sufficient evidence of their right to assume the power they coveted. Any attempt therefore to control them they denounced as tyranny and usurpation, which they were fully determined to resist. So great was this infatuated self-conceit, that they were content to appeal to God himself for the decision of their claim; thus challenging their Creator to defend his own appointments, and to disprove their right to new model the

[o] Jude 11.

[p] See Note XC. Appendix.

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public service which he required, according to the dictates of their own inclinations.

The event of this appeal proves, that no fancied qualifications for the ministerial office can supersede the necessity of divine appointment, or justify any man in [q] "taking this honour unto himself," or exercising its functions, until he has received a regular commission. Even Jesus Christ, we are assured, "glorified not himself to be made an high priest," but submitted to the necessity of an outward calling; thus teaching us his disciples, that no inward [r] gifts, however extraordinary, no conviction of holiness, however well founded, can authorize any man to act as his ambassador, (the character with which every priest is necessarily invested,) until he has received his credentials from God himself, through the hands of those who have succeeded the Apostles in their peculiar office and power.

These examples then, drawn from the sacred pages, suggest to us the two principal causes of religious disunion. The one,

[q] Heb. v. 4, 5. [r] See Note XCI. Appendix.

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that pride of superior wisdom, which shews itself in presuming to alter the instituted ordinances of God; the other, that conceit of superior holiness and spiritual gifts, which incites its deluded possessors to resist his appointed ministers, and to obtrude themselves into sacred offices, which they have no other title to undertake, than that furnished them by their own arrogant opinion of their personal merits and qualifications. In either case, individual offenders against established order may be so far blinded as to suppose, that they are doing God service; but the "envying, strife, and "divisions," which they will ever produce in the Church, will furnish melancholy proof that such labourers [s] "know not what "manner of spirit they are of;" and that, however they may imagine themselves to be acting under the sanction and direction of divine authority, they are still in truth "carnal, and walk as men." To trace to their source the various divisions which the annals of the Church have recorded, and to shew how far each of them might in its

[s] Luke ix. 55.

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commencement be referred to one of these modifications of pride, as its probable cause, would be an invidious, though not perhaps a difficult task.

The student in ecclesiastical history, once possessed of those general principles of church communion with which a careful examination of Scripture will furnish him, may however be safely left to pursue the inquiry for himself. They will enable him to recognize legitimate ecclesiastical authority, amidst the conflicting assertions and confident claims of those, who either wholly deny its existence, or affirm that it reposes in themselves: they will instruct him to distinguish "the faith once delivered to "the saints" from the errors of its pretended disciples; and convince him, that Christianity itself is not chargeable with the miseries and conflicts, which those who are ignorant of its true spirit have introduced among its professors.

The proper line of discrimination however must be carefully drawn, that due credit for conscientious motives may be

[t] Jude 3.

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given to many who have separated from the Church; that ample allowances may be made for prejudices of education, and for all the various circumstances which give a tone and colour to human opinion, and often imperceptibly bias the judgment, and prevent the free exertion of the reasoning faculty. We may humbly hope that a merciful God, who knows whereof we are made, and alone can mark the operation of those secret springs which actuate the conduct of individuals, will look with an eye of mercy upon all who so wander from his fold; and thus hoping, we shall remember that he who taught us [u] "not to "judge or set at nought our brother," taught us also to desire and to seek the *good* of all. In our conduct therefore and demeanour towards individuals, whatever may be their religious opinions or profession, we are to hold the truth in love; neither compromising it from tenderness to those by whom it is rejected, nor tempted by our zeal for its support to forget the great duty of charity. For

[u] Rom. xiv. 10.

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though the Scriptures declare that all divisions among Christians *originally* spring from the same evil root of pride, yet divisions once produced may be perpetuated upon less reprehensible principles; and however the first authors of heresies or schisms may be amenable to that fearful woe denounced by our Saviour himself against those who [x] *cause* offences; yet we trust that many, whom their persuasions or example may have led into error; many, who have received it as an hereditary possession, and seem scarcely to have possessed the opportunity or the means of emancipating themselves from those prejudices, in which education and habit have involved them; may be exempted from much of their guilt and their condemnation. But be this as it may, *our* duty cannot be mistaken; [y] "as far as lieth "in us, we must live peaceably" with such persons, though we condemn their errors; and while we [z] contend earnestly for the discipline as well as doctrine of the Church,

[x] Matt. xviii. 7.
[y] Rom. xii. 18.
[z] See Note XCII. Appendix.

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as becomes its appointed guardians; in the true spirit of Christian charity, we should never cease to pour forth our earnest prayers to God, that he would be pleased to recall them to the truth.

In proceeding therefore to apply these observations to the origin of those divisions, which have continually disturbed our Church from the period of the Reformation to the present hour; it is intended rather to inquire into the *circumstances* which produced them, than the *motives* of those by whom they may have been occasioned or promoted. The causes of religious disunion, and the motives of its authors, are indeed declared in general terms by the Spirit of truth. But how far the general censures and denunciations of holy Writ may be applicable to particular cases, it will ever be difficult and hazardous to determine: [a] "the heart is deceitful above "all things;" and many are they whom it teaches to [b] "call evil good, and good "evil;" to fancy themselves desirous of

[a] Jeremiah xvii. 9. [b] Isaiah v. 20.

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supporting the cause of truth and holiness, when in fact they are advocates of party feelings, of unreasonable prejudices, or of indefensible errors.

The Reformation was effected in this country under circumstances, which, however trying and difficult they proved to the Reformers themselves, were in some respects particularly favourable to the purity and efficacy of their labours. The prejudices of Henry VIII. in favour of the superstitious doctrines of the Romish Church were scarcely counterbalanced by his jealousy of its temporal usurpations, although these trenched upon his authority, and thwarted his passions. Hence the impetuous, unsteady, and tyrannical disposition of their sovereign, obliged the venerable Cranmer and his associates to proceed with anxious[d] circumspection in their dangerous labour. They were also themselves wise and moderate men, averse to all hasty and violent measures, and desirous of re-

[c] See Note XCIII. Appendix.
[d] See Note XCIV. Appendix.
[e] See Note XCV. Appendix.

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moving the corruptions of the Church, without injuring that apostolic doctrine and constitution which it had preserved. By carefully studying the writings of the early [f] Fathers, and the history of the first ages of Christianity, they had been enabled to trace the innovations of Popery to their source, and clearly to distinguish them from the truth which they had so long debased and obscured. Under the superintendance and direction of such men, the Church of England became an example of purity in doctrine and discipline; and as such, she excited the [g] admiration of those who were engaged in the same labour in foreign countries, and obtained their unqualified commendation. From them she received the honourable [h] title of "the soundest portion of the Reformation;" and while they praised God for having raised up such a bulwark for the Protestant cause, they hesitated not to express their unfeigned [i] regret, that circumstances over

[f] See Note XCVI. Appendix.
[g] See Note XCVII. Appendix.
[h] See Note XCVIII. Appendix.
[i] See Note XCIX. Appendix.

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which they had no control prevented them from conforming in all respects to her model.

Her doctrines they allowed to be pure, her discipline to be primitive and apostolic; and they particularly applauded the [k] moderation which had induced her to require no more of her members, than by evident warranty of Scripture could be proved; and to abstain in her public formularies from the deep investigation of those intricate questions, which had involved other branches of the Reformation in so much perplexity and confusion. Such then was the Church of England in the judgment of those Protestants, amongst whom her bitterest enemies were afterwards fostered. Too many however of the foreign Reformers, although originally impressed with reverence for the ancient government of the Church, being, as they conceived, compelled to deviate from it, and to form a new ecclesiastical constitution for themselves, soon became enamoured of their own work. Habit made

[k] See Note C. Appendix.

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them partial to the discipline which necessity had introduced; and they learned by degrees to identify the episcopal order with the errors of Popery, and to consider the new model as essential to the complete triumph of spiritual liberty. While they were thus dividing the Church of Christ, professedly with the intent of rendering its reformation still more perfect, their example could not but be generally injurious. When once the barriers of ancient authority had been removed, and men were taught that they might form ecclesiastical institutions, and appoint ecclesiastical rulers for themselves, the lesson was too flattering to the pride of human nature not to be speedily learned. And as the oppressive tyranny of the Romish Church had predisposed its victims to confound the authority itself with its abuse, a system which promised effectually to secure them against a recurrence of such oppression, by destroying the whole form of government under which it had been exercised, easily found supporters.

Some therefore, even at this early pe-

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riod, had arisen in our own country, and declared themselves not satisfied with the prudent and deliberate measures of their superiors. In their zeal against Romish errors, they [1] demanded a total abrogation of the discipline and ceremonial which those errors had polluted: not contented with removing the superstitions which Popery had engrafted upon the ancient forms of worship, they required that those forms themselves should be laid aside, as if they had been incurably tainted by the mixture: the most decent vestments, the most innocent and even edifying ceremonies, if once used by the mystic Babylon, were in their opinion to be regarded as equally abominable with her most childish trappings and disgusting mummeries: and not only did they expect the abuses of lawful authority, which she had sanctioned, to be reformed, but the hierarchy itself to be abolished, as the worst minister of her corruptions. While such were the secret wishes of many, who however had yet

[1] See Note CI. Appendix.

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given no other open proof of discontent, than by objecting to the ministerial habits retained in the Church, as at least inexpedient, if not unlawful; the reestablishment of the Papal sway under Mary, and the bloody persecution which attended it, drove numbers both of the laity and the clergy beyond the seas, to find a temporary refuge from the storm, in the charitable hospitality of their Protestant brethren.

The salutary restraints of that ecclesiastical authority, which, under the superintendance of Cranmer, had been generally exercised with temperate firmness, being thus at once removed; and the innovating spirit of the discontented being encouraged by the example of those who had afforded them shelter, their leaders assembled at [m] Frankfort; and having secured the protection of the magistrates, set up a new [n] order and discipline of their own, in which the [o] ancient form of epi-

[m] See Note CII. Appendix.

[n] See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 129.

[o] See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 129, 130. Articles 7, 9. p. 135. Articles 39, 40, 41, 42, 43. p. 144. Answers

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scopal government was superseded; the [p] catechism of Calvin substituted for that of the Church of England; and the Liturgy hastily [q] renounced, as not always agreeable to the word of God, as enjoining a ceremonial, unprofitable in some respects, intolerable in others.

Thus did the schism which afterwards rent the Church of England in pieces first rear its head in a foreign land: and the pressure of external persecution, which has generally been found to unite the sufferers more closely for their mutual support, in this instance afforded an opportunity to factious and turbulent men, of inflicting a wound upon the Protestant Church, more grievous than all the evil which the malice of its open enemies could devise for its injury.

The blood of the martyrs set the seal of truth to that reformed religion which they taught, and some even of those who had

of Hales, Whitehead, &c. to the reasons of Horne and the Episcopalians.

[p] See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 130.

[q] See Note CIII. Appendix.

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been proof against their arguments, were converted by the constancy with which they endured the suffering of death, rather than renounce [r] "the truth as it is in "Jesus." But while these illustrious men [s] "were tortured, not accepting deliver-"ance," that the purity of the Gospel might triumph in their death; their exiled brethren were too many of them labouring in the work of trouble and division, and giving that advantage to the common enemy by their dissensions, which he had in vain attempted to gain, by assailing the doctrines of the Reformation, or persecuting its defenders.

These unfortunate contentions, if not openly promoted, were at least not [t] discouraged by Calvin; who, [u] disappointed by the prudence of Cranmer in his attempt to direct the English Reformation, seemed not unwilling to lend his aid to those who were destroying the fabric, which he had

[r] Ephes. iv. 21. [s] Heb. xi. 35.

[t] See Calvin's Answer to Knox and others. Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 69.

[u] See Note CIV. Appendix.

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not been permitted to rear after his own model. To him the discontented constantly appealed; and by his epistles he strengthened their opposition to those who were determined to maintain the established ritual and government of their Church, as far as their unfortunate circumstances would permit; and when finally driven from the field, under his auspices these separatists found an asylum.[x] It may perhaps be true, that, during the struggle, greater heat and violence were manifested by both parties, than became professors of the same faith, and sufferers under a common calamity: but it should not be forgotten, that the contest was of no slight or trifling nature: it involved the preservation or destruction of that Church, which was "built upon the foundation laid by the "Apostles;" and it is evident, even from the partial record of an avowed favourer of the projected innovations, that nothing less was meditated, than an entire alteration of the public service; an abolition of all

[x] See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 88.

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those ceremonies, which primitive use had sanctioned; a total destruction of that hierarchy, which had ever been deemed essential to the very being of a Christian Church. It was the rooted opinion of these enthusiastic men, that [y] "in Geneva "alone God's word was truly preached, "manners best reformed, and true com- "fort to be found:" thither their eyes and their hearts were directed; and to the order of Geneva, as the "purest reformed "Church in the world," they were determined to conform. With this disposition did they return from exile; and instead of profiting by the advice of their more temperate brethren, who [z] urged the propriety of submitting to such orders as should be established by authority, unless they were in themselves wicked; and represented the folly of contending about ceremonies, which after all they could not be allowed to ap-

[y] See Wittingham's Letter. Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 80, 81.

[z] See Answer of the Church at Frankfort to the Church at Geneva. Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 183.

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point; they resolved [a] "to hold fast toge-"ther," that thus they might be enabled to establish at home that doctrine and practice which they had witnessed in the reformed congregations abroad; publicly affirming, that the sufferings of the Church were to be considered as a [b] punishment inflicted upon them for their former negligence in this respect.

Such was the origin of that fatal discord, which from that time continued to trouble the Church, and had once nearly effected its destruction. The introduction of a purer doctrine, of a more scriptural liturgy, and a more efficient discipline, were the professed objects of its first promoters; and in charity we must suppose that they were persuaded, that the alterations for which they contended were real improvements; we must believe them to have been sincere in their intentions, though mistaken in their conduct. But had their

[a] See Letter from the Church at Geneva to the Churches of Arrow and Frankfort. Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 181.

[b] Ibid. Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 182.

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zeal been tempered by discretion, had they duly weighed the value of that humble mind, which thinks soberly of itself and its own attainments, surely they would not have refused to sacrifice their own private fancies to the collective wisdom of those who had the rule over them. Had they considered, that the peace of the Church is not to be wantonly disturbed, and that the guilt and punishment of strife and division will ever attach to those who unnecessarily resist established authority, would they not at least have hesitated, before they suffered their intemperate opposition to appointments confessedly lawful, to involve them in a responsibility so tremendous?

But such unhappily was not the temper of those, who could boldly set themselves in array against institutions which fifteen centuries had sanctioned, and denounce them as antichristian and superstitious; as if it had been reserved for them alone to discover, how God ought to be served, and his Church to be constituted and governed! Apparently under the influence of

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this persuasion, they proceeded blindly in the work of confusion and disorder, too confident of their own sagacity, to doubt the lawfulness of their object, too deeply impressed with a false conceit of its importance, to regard the certain mischiefs attendant on its pursuit. Their writings and their language evinced a presumptuous conviction of their own eminent holiness and superior attainments; they were the [c] learned and the godly; theirs was the only perfect model of public worship and ecclesiastical discipline; their conduct alone was modest, humble, peaceable, and devout; while all who opposed them were cruel tyrants, enemies of Christian liberty, of the glory of God, and the edification of their brethren. Could these misguided men have foreseen the whole of that evil, which their opposition would eventually bring upon their Church and country, we may believe that they would have shuddered at the prospect; that they would not willingly have been the authors of

[c] See Note CV. Appendix.

those all strange and dangerous innovations, of those monstrous heresies, of the rebellion and murder, the blasphemy and sacrilege, which followed in the train of that schism, first engendered by their contentions. They soon indeed began to perceive, that the principles which they too hastily had laid down, led to conclusions far more dangerous than they had anticipated: and some of their leaders bitterly repented of their conduct; and wished, when it was too late, that they could have repaired the mischief they had occasioned.

This however they found to be impossible: when the spirit of party is once awakened, and the prejudices and interests of men are engaged against established order, it is vain to endeavour to recall them, by the force of reason, to that submission which they have unreasonably renounced: and they, whose authority has easily prevailed to the introduction of strife and division, will infallibly discover,

[d] Hooker's preface to his Ecclesiastical Polity.

[e] See Note CVI. Appendix.

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to their confusion and disappointment, that it is utterly incompetent to the restoration of union and peace. Such was the case in this instance; the disciples of the first nonconformists soon learned to think themselves wiser than their teachers. They had been instructed to believe, that the Church was not sufficiently reformed, that its government was antichristian, and its service superstitious; they therefore concluded, that it was their duty to forsake it, and to form themselves into separate congregations, where they might freely use that discipline and worship, which had been recommended to them as perfect. Thus persuaded, they utterly disregarded the admonitions of their original leaders; who would have prevented them from reducing those principles to practice, which they themselves had inculcated; considering them to be [f] "false apostles and deceitful workers," or at best weak and timid men, who dared not to accomplish the work which in their consciences they approved. Thus did the evil continue to

[f] 2 Cor. xi. 13.

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increase, in defiance of all the remedies which the prudence, zeal, and ability of the steady defenders of the Church could apply, until it prevailed for a time over established order and authority, and the miseries inseparable from disunion had fully proved the wisdom of the Apostle's caution, [1] "If ye bite and devour one an-"other, take heed that ye be not consumed "one of another."

The lesson however thus severely inculcated, though salutary in its effects, as it has taught us to provide for the future security of the Church, has not hitherto induced her adversaries to heal the breaches which misguided zeal had produced. The same unyielding adherence to their own inventions, which marked the character of her early opponents, still obtains among their descendants; the disunion is perpetuated, though all the motives which originally led to it have by degrees lost their influence; the spirit of disaffection and hostility still continues to operate, and ever will continue until party feelings can

[1] Galatians v. 15.

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be separated from religious discussions, and disputants shall consent to make truth the only object of their pursuit, and to follow it even though it lead them to self-condemnation.

In a word, while men "walk as men," and not as Christians, there will be among them "envying, strife, and divisions." The course of events may change the subjects of contention, but some will always exist: the artful will magnify them for their own advantage; and the unlearned and unwary will be led away by their craftiness, and become the victims of prejudice, and the instruments of faction. The enemies of all religion may endeavour to represent these unhappy contentions as a proof, that it has no truth or certainty in it; that the blessings expected to result from it are more than counterbalanced by the evil which it occasions. But the same perverted reasoning might be employed to prove, that the sun itself does not exist, because some of its phenomena are yet subjects of doubt or discussion; or that its influence is not really benefical, because

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the arid desert or the pestilential vapour are produced by its unmitigated rays. Ours is still a religion of peace, though wars and contention, distress and misery, have arisen from the unsubdued passions of its professors. These are not to be attributed to religion itself, but to that depraved nature, which it has not been able entirely to reclaim. Disunion and schism are carnal sins, and carnal men will continue to encourage and commit them. The peaceable Christian however, while he learns to know such characters and shun them, will submit with patience to the evils which their unruly passions may occasion; looking forward in hope to that predicted time, when such troubles shall cease to agitate the Church of Christ; when the Spirit shall obtain its due influence over the flesh, and [h] "the work of righteousness shall be "peace, and the effect of righteousness "quietness and assurance for ever."

[h] Isaiah xxxii. 17.

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SERMON VI.

MATT. XVIII. 7.

It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that man by whom the offence cometh.

THAT the divisions of Christians are a scandal to our holy religion, and have ever tended to contract the sphere of its saving influence, is a position which few, even among the separatists themselves, have been prepared to controvert: perhaps indeed it may be asserted, that the mischievous consequences of these divisions have never been more truly [a] depicted, or lamented with a greater appearance of real feeling, than by those divines, who prepared the way for the separation from our own Church.

But while all moderate and reflecting

[a] See Note CVII. Appendix.

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persons of every persuasion have agreed in deploring the breaches of Christian unity; those who have been charged with producing them have endeavoured to repel the accusation by arguments, which, if valid, would attach the guilt of disunion upon the Church herself, by proving that a longer continuance in her communion was incompatible with the preservation of a good conscience towards God. They have readily allowed, that schism is a grievous sin, and that fearful punishments are reserved for those to whom its guilt attaches: but they have steadily maintained, that theirs is the suffering, and not the criminal party; and that the woe denounced against such offences must be the portion of those, who would have imposed a yoke upon the neck of their brethren, which they were not able to bear. This ground of defence, which in fact involves the whole question at issue between the Church of England and her dissenting brethren, it will be the object of the present discourse to investigate: and if it can be shewn, that this Church has given no rea-

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possible cause of offence to those, who have withdrawn from her communion; and that she has left no means untried, by which, consistently with her duty as an appointed guardian of the truth, she could hope to bring back her erring children to a sense of their obligations; it may be concluded, that she is innocent of that great offence, which has thus been laid to her charge.

[a] It may be readily granted, that all separation from a particular church does not, in every case, necessarily involve the sin of schism; and that, where the separatist can prove, by the clear and undoubted testimony of holy Scripture, that unlawful terms of communion were exacted from him, his conduct is not only justifiable, but such as it was his indispensable duty to adopt.

But at the same time it may be assumed, that no trivial cause, no inherited prejudices, no hastily formed opinions, should influence any man to take such a step; for

[b] See Note CVIII. Appendix.

[c] See Note CIX. Appendix.

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as schism is a great and grievous offence, since it not only disturbs the peace, but hinders the salvation of Christians, no common caution should be thought sufficient in so momentous a concern.

The warning voice of Scripture is so plainly raised against idolatry and false doctrine, that where a church can be clearly [d] convicted of having corrupted the saving truths of the Gospel, or debased the Christian sacraments and worship by idolatrous practices, it is evidently our duty to come out of her, and be separate from her communion. Such was the [e] charge proved against the Church of Rome, at the period of the Reformation. She had made the word of God of none effect by her traditions; she had corrupted the doctrine of Christ by her interpretations, and obscured it by her innovations; she had taught men to rely on their own merits for salvation, instead of placing their confidence in the atonement made for sin by Jesus Christ; and in contempt of the plain declaration of

[d] See Note CX. Appendix.

[e] See Note CXI. Appendix.

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Scripture, that "there is but one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," she had encouraged her members to put up their prayers to many mediators of her own appointment.

In addition to the false doctrine which she had thus preached, and the idolatry she had recommended; she had presumed to debase the sacraments by her own vain inventions; refusing the cup to the laity; and converting the eucharist itself into an abomination, by substituting an idolatrous worship of the outward sign, for that pure and reasonable service, which our Saviour required.

It therefore became the duty of those, whose eyes had been opened to a knowledge of her errors and corruptions, when she refused to reform herself, to depart from her, lest they should become partakers in her plagues; and to restore the purity of faith and worship, by reverting to the primitive model, from which she had schismatically departed.

The Church of England however re-

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5.

nounced not only the errors, but the dominion of Rome. As an independent branch of the Catholic Church, she shook off that usurped supremacy, which the Roman pontiffs had assumed in an age of ignorance and superstition; and having thus asserted that liberty, which by right belonged to her, she employed her freedom in purifying herself from the pollutions, which during her slavery she had contracted. She had therefore an additional motive for separating from the see of Rome, as a national Church, which of itself distinguishes her case from that of those individuals, who have since renounced her communion, and when an appeal has been made to her example, for the purpose of illustrating and defending their conduct, as if the situation of the parties was in all respects similar, the most erroneous conclusions have been the result of the comparison.

The Church of England claims no dominion over her members, but that which is inherent in her, as a spiritual society; and it surely would not be sound reasoning to maintain, that because she was justified

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in resisting an usurped authority, therefore they are not bound in subjection to her legitimate government.

That the members of every true church ought to submit to its enactments, provided they be not contrary to the revealed will of God, does not seem to have been denied even by those, who, under the direction of Brown and Barrow, formed the first separate congregations in this country. They rested their cause, not upon the wild notion of a natural right to worship God as they pleased, but upon the plea of a necessity for further reformation. They [h] denied that the Church of England was a true Church of Christ, and therefore they maintained that it ought to be deserted. Upon this ground then alone must the question be tried: if it can be proved, that the Church of England has exacted from her members sinful terms of communion; that her doctrine is fraught with fundamental errors; that her worship is idolatrous, her ceremonial superstitious and an-

[g] See Note CXII. Appendix.
[h] See Note CXIII. Appendix.

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tichristian; then may she be justly accused of having produced the schisms which have destroyed her peace, by forcing those to relinquish her communion, who wished to maintain [i] "the faith once delivered to the "saints," and [k] "worship the Lord in the "beauty of holiness."

Happily however her defence against such accusations has been undertaken by persons, whose conduct in other respects has ranked them among her adversaries. Calvin himself, whose authority on the present question will scarcely be objected to by his followers, has [l] unequivocally declared, that her liturgy, ceremonial, and government, at which the offence was originally taken, though not so pure and faultless as in his judgment they might have been rendered, contained nothing which could be termed impious or intolerable.

[m] Beza and his associates in the ministry at Geneva, hesitated not solemnly to warn

[i] Jude 3. [k] Psalm xxix. 2.
[l] See Note CXIV. Appendix.
[m] See Note CXV. Appendix.

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the scrupulous and dissatisfied nonconformists against a separation, as a proceeding wholly unjustifiable; inasmuch as the ceremonies, practices, and habits, of which they complained, were not in their own nature impious, ungodly, or idolatrous, and the purity of the Christian doctrine and sacraments was preserved. In the same spirit, the most distinguished leaders of the nonconformists themselves plainly declared, that the failings and imperfections of the Church of England, whatever they might be, were not such as made it necessary to withdraw from her communion; that as she was "a true Church, consisting of a "lawful ministry and a faithful people," holding the pure doctrine of the Gospel, and duly administering the holy sacraments; no man could separate from her without "incurring the reproach of mani-"fest schism."

Not only may abundant testimony of this general kind be extracted from their writings, but we shall find in them express

[n] See Note CXVI. Appendix.

admissions of the lawfulness of every particular, against which their objections were in general most forcibly levelled. How should this be hastily imputed to inconstancy or insincerity, though it may be difficult perhaps to reconcile such opinions so openly avowed, so steadily maintained, with their general conduct? They were fully convinced that the Church of England did not exact sinful terms of communion; and though they would willingly have carried the reformation farther than the sound judgment of those in authority would permit, and were so far irritated by the failure of their favourite projects, as to sow the seeds of all the troubles which ensued, by indulging in invectives against the ecclesiastical rulers whom they could not bias, and encouraging opposition to that authority which they could not control; yet they never deviated so widely from the line of truth and honesty, as to become the apologists of open separation. Even the Puritans, who overthrew the

[o] See Note CXVII. Appendix.

[p] See Note CXVIII. Appendix.

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Church, and raised their own Presbyterian discipline upon its ruins, retained the arguments of their forerunners the nonconformists in favour of unity, though they had so entirely forsaken their practice, and accomplished that work of destruction, which they would have prevented. If they may be allowed to declare the ground of their own hostility to the Church, and the principles by which they were guided in compassing its ruin, it will not be difficult to prove, out of their own writings, that ground to be untenable, and those principles erroneous. They were bold and intrepid advocates for Christian liberty and the right of private judgment, as long as the authority of the Church remained to set due bounds to that liberty, and to prevent the judgment of individuals from disturbing the peace and good order of the whole body. But no sooner had they succeeded in overturning this salutary power, and establishing their own supremacy in its place, than these unwearied upholders

a See Note CXIX. Appendix.

of liberty of conscience were at once impressed with a very strong sense of the evils of schism; they clearly saw the necessity of maintaining ecclesiastical discipline, and the duty of submission to pastors and teachers.

To her enemies then the Church of England may safely appeal for proof, that she is not the author of those offences which have been laid to her charge. They will [s] declare, that she has preserved inviolate the faith committed to her trust; that neither does her form of government, nor the ceremonial she has appointed, nor the liturgy she has enjoined, contain in it that which cannot be maintained without sin. The expediency of many of her forms, and much of her practice, they were indeed strenuous in denying: they upheld their own newly devised model of presbyterial discipline, as more nearly conformed to primitive practice; they extolled their own modes of worship as more scriptural, their extemporaneous prayers as

[r] See Note CXX. Appendix.
[s] See Note CXXI. Appendix.

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more edifying; and they scrupled not, in the heat of an ungoverned zeal, to vilify and defame those who checked their irregularities, and prevented their innovations: but further than this they were not prepared to go: and as they have left upon record in their writings the sinfulness of that disunion, which by their conduct they promoted; so have their descendants, who reduced to practice those principles of separation which they had taught them, no less forcibly defended the necessity and lawfulness of spiritual authority; no less convincingly proved the mischiefs and the guilt of schism.

The Church of England however, though in her adversity she sank under the efforts of her rebellious children, could not be tempted in her returning prosperity to imitate the intolerance, with which they had exercised their temporary power.

Fully determined to keep that committed to her trust, she neither bartered truth for safety in the hour of peril, nor lost sight of Christian moderation in maintaining that truth in the day of her exaltation.

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It was her earnest desire to live peaceably; but she knew that her first duty was to preserve her purity: and while her anxiety not to put a stumbling block in the way of her members, induced her cautiously to refrain from unnecessarily straitening the terms of her communion; she was not to be tempted, by any visionary schemes of unattainable unity, to sacrifice the sacred deposit, of which she was the appointed guardian. She well knew that in the present state of the world, "it must needs "be that offences come;" and that the guilt would rest on those who were their authors: it was her care therefore neither to cause nor to perpetuate them by unwarrantable stiffness, or unscriptural propositions. And it will not be difficult to shew, that her constant love of peace, and her unwearied efforts to obtain and restore it, as fully vindicate her from the charge of throwing obstacles in the way of reconciliation; as her very enemies, by their own confession, exculpate her from having driven them to the necessity of revolting from her government.

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II. The efforts of the Church of England to promote unity were coeval with her own Reformation. As soon as Cranmer was able to turn his thoughts from the pressing necessities of his own spiritual charge, to the general state of the Protestant cause, he made [t] overtures to the principal foreign Reformers on this interesting subject. It was his wish to unite all the Protestant establishments both in doctrine and discipline; and had circumstances permitted the accomplishment of his views, the Church would have been brought to a nearer resemblance to the primitive model, than had ever been contemplated by the other Reformers. His labours at home prove what would have been the result of his success: and when we consider the mischiefs and the miseries which an agreement in fundamental points of doctrine, and the adoption of an uniform plan of ecclesiastical government would then have prevented; we cannot sufficiently lament,

[t] See Strype's Cranmer, b. ii. c. 15. b. iii. c. 24, 25.

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that any circumstances should have frustrated this excellent design.

Disappointed in this object, the venerable Archbishop was obliged to limit his views to the establishment of unity at home; and to him we owe the first draft of those articles, which, however they have at times been distorted by a mischievous ingenuity, contain in their present form, when fairly and candidly interpreted, the most unexceptionable summary of Christian doctrine and discipline which has ever been composed. They were originally designed to promote [x] "concord and quietness in religion," and the alterations they have subsequently undergone were made with the same intention: and although the misconceptions of some, and the perverseness of others, have raised controversies out of this confession of faith, which was drawn up to prevent them; yet, before blame is imputed to the Church of England for not having guarded her for-

[u] See Strype's Parker, b. ii. c. 2.

[x] See Cranmer's letter to the Lords of the Council. Strype's Cranmer, Appendix, No 64.

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mularies against being made occasions of dissension, it should be considered, that such is the necessary imperfection of all human language, that no statement of religious doctrine has ever yet been framed in terms so precise, as to be free from similar censure.

The same love of unity which Cranmer felt, dictated the proceedings of his immediate successors. The final settlement of the [y] Articles, the publication of the [z] Homilies in their present form, the revision of the Liturgy, and its authorized establishment by the [a] Act of Uniformity, all prove, that those, by whom the government in Church and State was then administered, neglected no proper means of providing for religious harmony and order. And could power, when guided by wisdom, have ensured success; could moderation, candour, and learning, have convinced or conciliated their opponents; these efforts would not have failed. For if zeal and piety, if profound knowledge, if discretion,

[y] A. D. 1562. [z] A. D. 1563. [a] 1st Elizabeth.

of primitive purity of doctrine and strictness of conduct in its superior clergy, dignified and comprehended a church, than amidst the brightest days of our establishment may be found in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. When indeed we look back to those times, and contemplate the deep learning, the powerful studies, the indefatigable zeal, and stupendous labours of those fathers of the English Church, we have reason to think humbly of all modern exertions and attainments. But however humiliating may be the sense of inferiority, which such a comparison will excite, it will yet tend to establish this important fact, that nothing can be more unjust than to attribute the dissension prevailing among Christians, in the present times, to any general misconduct of the clergy.

These unhappy divisions are not things of yesterday; they have been bequeathed to us, not produced by us: and if neither the arguments of Hooker could convince his antagonists, nor the well-directed admonitions of Parker could prevent or restrain the progress of schism; the clergy of that

present day may still be engaged, if they should find a remedy for similar evils.

When indeed the original causes of this division are impartially weighed, when it is considered, that men, neither deficient in the knowledge of the Scriptures nor in attention to many of the leading duties of their religion, though convinced that the Church of England was blameless in her doctrine, and though unable to affix a serious charge to her ritual or her discipline, could yet choose rather to disturb her peace, than to submit to her undoubted authority, and sometimes even in matters of mere external decoration and decency; when it is further remembered, that many of those tumults and disorders, under which the very form and profession of Christianity had once nearly sunk in this kingdom, might have been prevented, if those men could have been prevailed upon to submit to the injunctions of lawful power, in matters by their own confession involving no sin; such examples will, it is to be hoped, teach the propriety of abstaining from severe or general censures,

either of the Church, or of its present ministry as the authors or promoters of these calamities.

But the desire of our church to promote unity has not been displayed merely by calling on her members to join in one common confession of faith, to adopt a uniform mode of worship, to submit to one and the same spiritual authority. She has also shewn it in her anxiety to frame these public documents and regulations in such a manner, as to comprehend all whom she could satisfy without a sacrifice of essentials. The present forms and ordinances of the Church were not settled without the most mature deliberation. Not only were they carefully [b] discussed by her clergy themselves in their [c] synods; but also in repeated conferences with those who were avowedly hostile to her appointments. On these occasions, objections were patiently listened to, and temperately debated, and a readiness was shewn to alter or remove all that deviated in the slightest degree

[b] See Note CXXII. Appendix.

[c] See Strype's Parker, b. ii. c. 12.

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from the purest models, which ecclesiastical history presented. Nay, so earnest was the desire of the commissioners on the part of the establishment, to concede all that could be given up, without prejudice to fundamental verities, or institutions deemed to be undoubtedly apostolic; that some of the suggestions then adopted were far more forcibly recommended by an inclination to humour the wayward caprice of the discontented, as far as higher duties would allow, than by the arguments brought forward in their support.

The conferences held at Hampton Court and at the Savoy, were conducted on the part of the Church in the same moderate and conciliatory spirit, which has always animated her counsels.

Those who examine the objections urged by the nonconformists at Hampton Court, will find that they involved no material point of doctrine; that they contained no protest against the episcopal polity, as unscriptural; nor against the general

[d] See Barlow's Account of the Hampton Court Conference.

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character of the forms and ceremonies then established, as unlawful; but they turned wholly upon secondary and unimportant questions. Such indeed was the only ground of complaint which could be taken by men, who had not only allowed, but maintained, that the Church of England was "a true Church," and that "he who separated from it cut off himself from Christ." But if, though so convinced, they could still make a merit of refusing to conform, because regulations of order and ceremony, which appeared comely, decent, and edifying to the majority of their brethren, were not sacrificed to their unreasonable scruples; may it not be fairly supposed, that they would scarcely have submitted to the authority of their ecclesiastical superiors, even had all been granted them which they then demanded? The conferences at the Savoy related principally to proposed alterations in the

[e] See Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, p. 36.

[f] See third paper printed at the end of Barlow's Account, art. 5.

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Liturgy. But it appeared, from the general language of the dissenting commissioners, that had their propositions on this subject been all adopted, they had still demands of far greater importance in reserve, which struck at the root of episcopal authority. Although these were not brought forward, yet the utter impossibility of ever satisfying those who dissent from established rule and power, by any thing short of a surrender of all order and government into their own hands, is sufficiently proved by the manner in which the points actually at issue were maintained.

The ground then taken by the dissenting divines was calculated effectually to preclude the establishment of any common form. They desired, that "nothing might be introduced into the prayers, and other forms of the Liturgy, which was doubtful or questioned amongst pious, learned, and orthodox persons." The answer to this vague proposition was con-

[g] See Note CXXIII. Appendix.
[h] See Note CXXIV. Appendix.

clusive. It was observed, that it would first be necessary to determine who these persons were, before such a basis could be admitted; otherwise these qualities might be attributed to any disputant, who conceived that he possessed them. And if nothing could be finally settled until the consent of every individual was obtained, who chose to assert his right to form an opinion upon the subject, all things must fall into confusion. By pertinaciously adhering to a proposal so loosely worded, they therefore crushed at once the hope of satisfactory arrangement: for no more certain method could be devised to prevent uniformity of appointment in external rites and ceremonies, than that of giving to all, who might be willing to assert it, a power of putting a veto upon the proceedings. Even the course of argument pursued by those commissioners, who were esteemed the most learned and able of their

[i] See Account of all the Proceedings—Copy of Papers, p. 24. also Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 2. b. 9. p. 880.

[k] See Note CXXV. Appendix.

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party, evinced that an attempt to satisfy every scruple, which self-named orthodox and pious individuals might have started, would have been an endless labour. And when they required, that no form of prayer should be so established, as to deprive individual ministers of the power of [l] altering it in their public ministrations, the possibility of agreement was at once destroyed. Hence it became evident, that although the Church was labouring for peace, her adversaries were preparing for battle; and that while real unity was *her* object, *they* would be satisfied with nothing short of a licence for endless diversity. Under such circumstances, where conciliation was hopeless, farther concession would have been unjustifiable. Having therefore removed from her public offices all that remained of which the most scrupulous could justly complain, she wisely determined to stand upon [m] "the foundation of the apostles "and prophets," and to maintain the

[l] See Account of Proceedings, p. 5.

[m] Ephesians ii. 20.

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faith which they delivered in its primitive purity, or to perish in the attempt.

When then the Church of England is charged with having caused the offences, which have torn so many of her members from her communion; when the guilt of schism is attempted to be removed from the separation, and affixed upon her, those of her members who desire to plead her cause against so serious an accusation, should investigate these divisions at their source. And as the very persons, who first refused to conform to her institutions, and by their complaints and invectives laid the foundation of these divisions, have left upon record their confession, that neither the doctrine, the discipline, nor the practice of the Church afforded any just grounds or pretences for deserting her; in this confession they will find her innocence, and the guilt of her rebellious children fully established.

But it has been said, that, as the objections of the nonconformists confessedly applied to things indifferent, it was the duty of the Church, as a tender mother,

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to innovate somewhat to their infirmity. They professed to be agitated by doubts and scruples, which they could not remove in charity: therefore she should have afforded them relief, and by refusing to do this she certainly perpetuated the offence, although she did not cause it, and became responsible, in some degree at least, for the mischiefs which ensued.

As however the object which the Church of England proposed to herself was the preservation of unity, it became her to consider, not the benefit of a few only, but the edification of all. Before therefore the concessions, which some required for their private satisfaction, could have been safely granted, it was necessary to [n] ascertain that others would not have been offended by them. For it could not otherwise be expected, that ceremonies and forms, decent and significant in themselves, hallowed in the eyes of the generality of her members by long use, and strictly con-

[n] Such was the reason given for not acceding to the proposed alterations in the Liturgy. See Account of all the Proceedings—Copy of Papers, p. 13.

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formable to the practices of the purest ages of Christianity, should be abolished, to please the wayward fancies, or remove the unreasonable scruples of a few individuals, who doubted their expediency.

It is to be remembered also, that these individuals were by profession teachers of religious truth; that they were not supplicating indulgences for the uninstructed, but for themselves: and it is notorious, that, although to suit their immediate purpose they pleaded infirmity of conscience and want of information, at other times they claimed to be considered as the pious, the godly, and the orthodox; and their sufficiency for their sacred office was declared by their adherents to be so undoubted, as to make their ejectment an irreparable loss to the Church. From these persons all the objections had originated; by them all the doubts and scruples felt by their disciples had been first suggested; and though they complained of being weak in these respects, it was apparent from their general character and assumptions, that they did not regard

themselves as "babes in Christ." Instead of allowing that they needed themselves to be "fed with milk," they asserted that they were fully able to feed others; nay, far more able than those of their brethren, whom, for this particular purpose, they chose to represent as stronger than themselves. To them then it might have been well objected, (and their own conduct, when vested with power, shewed that they admitted the validity of the argument,) that unity in the Church can only be preserved, by supporting the authority by which it may be enforced. But if the strong are to yield to the weak, the very foundations of this authority will be removed: the simple will claim a right to dictate to the learned; and he who is fully instructed in the doctrine of Christ, must submit to be directed in his spiritual office by the most ignorant of his flock.

Where therefore infirmity, thus ostentatiously professed, instead of teaching men submission, and filling them with an anxious desire of improvement, prompts them

p 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.

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to contend with those who are above them, and to resist the authority which interferes with their prejudices and misconceptions; it will be no breach of charity to suspect the sincerity of such persons, and to be on our guard against "a voluntary humility," too frequently assumed by those, who are "vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds," and think to "shew their wisdom by will worship." St. Paul indeed enjoins the Romans to "receive him that is weak into the faith;" he exhorts them not "to put a stumblingblock or an occasion of falling in their brother's way;" and, above all, to "follow after things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." But these rules seem to have little reference to the case before us. Christian charity, it is true, forbids individuals to despise a brother, or to exclude him from their intercourse, because his private judgment does not coincide with theirs in things indifferent. Such a brother it will be our duty to receive, as one who is "weak in the faith,"

p Col. ii. 18, 23. q Rom. xiv. i. 13, 19.

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but may become strong; and that no difficulties, or obstacles to his improvement in knowledge, may be laid in his way, we should avoid all "doubtful disputations" with him; knowing that they may tend rather to "engender strife," than to "godly edifying," which is in Jesus Christ.

But we are no where [t] taught, that the injunctions of public authority are to yield to the private scruples of such a person; the Apostle no where says, that the Church is not to ordain any rites or ceremonies, until she is certain that the disaffected can suggest no doubts of their expediency to the minds of such weak and uninstructed brethren; or that she is to alter those, which she has already appointed, even in deference to any, who may presume upon their own peculiar sanctity or knowledge. On the contrary, the very directions of the Apostle, which have been sometimes quoted in favour of such positions, are immediately preceded by an exhortation to submit to all lawful authority, as a point of

[r] 2 Tim. ii. 23. [s] 1 Tim. i. 4.

[t] See Note CXXVII. Appendix.

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Christian duty; to submit, "not only for "wrath, but also for conscience sake;" not only from fear of the penalty, to which disobedience may subject us, but because "the powers that be, are ordained of God," [u] and "he that resisteth the power, resisteth "the ordinance of God." [x] They who have chosen rather to leave the Church, and break the unity of the body of Christ, than comply with terms of communion, which involve no sinful dereliction of Christian duty, must remember, that the offence in this case lies in their schism, not in the lawful exercise of power, which that schism has resisted.

The Church, in her anxiety to preserve peace, may concede much to the wishes of her scrupulous children; she may alter the language of her forms, or the ceremonial of her public services, so far as to meet any rational or even plausible objection: but where she does not think fit to yield, either because the proposition appears in itself unreasonable, or because she has

[u] Rom. xiii. 5. [x] Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

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ground for believing, that the inconveniences resulting from concession would overbalance its advantages; there the obligation to obedience on the part of the rejected petitioners remains in full force, and the woe denounced in the text must fall on those by whom submission is thus wantonly refused.

In the instance which we have considered, the determination of our Church was grounded upon an accurate knowledge of the character and designs of those, with whom she was committed. They spoke indeed most pathetically of the mischiefs resulting from disunion; of the injustice of separating ministers from their parishes, and depriving them of their benefices, for nonconformity. But it must not be forgotten, that they caused the very divisions which they affected to lament; that they drove the clergy, with every species of cruelty and insult, from their preferments, for refusing to take a rebellious and schismatical engagement; and that, though

y See Preface to "Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy."

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earnest pleaders for indulgence to tender consciences when themselves under authority, in the time of their power, they were the decided [z] opponents of toleration.

It was also well known, that their views were not limited to a revision of the Liturgy, or an abolition of a few indifferent ceremonies; that they contemplated an alteration of the very constitution of the Church; and that nothing less than such an adoption of the Genevan model, as might have paved the way for their return to ecclesiastical power, would have satisfied their demands.

To have yielded to such persons would have been rather reprehensible weakness, than Christian moderation. It is indeed the duty of the Church to bear with the froward, and to [a] "support the weak;" but she is also ordained to be [b] "the pillar and "ground of the truth:" for this purpose authority was committed to her; and had she surrendered it into the hands of those, who sought it that they might introduce

[z] See Note CXXVIII. Appendix.

[a] 1 Thess. v. 14. [b] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

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their own imaginations into God's service, and mingle their own opinions with the doctrine of Christ; she would have been guilty before God and man of having betrayed that Gospel, which she had been raised up to preserve and defend. Relying therefore for support upon the wise provisions of that national constitution, with which her polity is inseparably interwoven, her object has since been to maintain her own doctrine and discipline unimpaired. And with that temperate spirit of true charity, which becomes the moderation of her character, she has ever been ready, as far as a due regard for her own security would allow, to promote every measure of toleration proposed for the benefit of those, who must now be considered as formally separated from her fold. To the candid and impartial among this class of Christians we may confidently appeal for the full confirmation of this truth. The sense of political inferiority may irritate the ambitious, or the decent splendor of our national establishment mortify the envious; the tongue of the adversary may be sharp-

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ened by occasional controversy, or temporary clamour may be excited by the firmness with which every attempt to remove the barriers of our ecclesiastical constitution has been resisted: but the wisest and the best of our dissenting brethren have never been unwilling to acknowledge, that they have always felt themselves most secure under its tolerant supremacy; and that, if political power or influence must be bestowed exclusively on any one class of Christians, to the Church of England alone it can be safely confided.

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SERMON VII.

MATT. xii. 30.

He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.

IT has been strongly, though somewhat coarsely observed by an eminent nonconformist divine, that "there is no part of "religion that Satan does not endeavour "to destroy, under pretence of promoting "it." Those who have most attentively considered the history of the Church, may perhaps be inclined to admit the truth of the position to its full extent; as that history will suggest to them many reasons for believing that the cause of Christianity has suffered more injury from the labours of its pretended advocates, than from the persecutions of its avowed enemies. The opposition of the latter has generally tended to

[a] Baxter. Cure of Church Divisions, p. 270.

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confirm and strengthen that faith, which they designed to destroy; while the former, by insidiously mixing themselves with the friends of religion, by misleading their judgment, misdirecting their zeal, and misapplying their exertions, have seldom failed to perplex its doctrines, and counteract its salutary operation on the human heart.

In no instance perhaps has this been more strikingly exemplified, than by the attempts which have been made, from time to time, to weaken or destroy the very foundations of Christian faith, under pretence of restoring unity among its professors.

Every well informed disciple of the blessed Jesus is persuaded, that [b] "envying and "strife" are unbecoming his holy calling, and is anxious to promote a better spirit among his brethren. Upon this predisposition therefore in favour of unity, the enemy has presumed; and, well aware that its real nature is in general but imperfectly understood, and that its most zealous advocates are not always fully instructed in

[b] 1 Cor. iii. 3.

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their proper means of securing it, he has too often made it a pretext for engaging them in labours, more likely to terminate in the overthrow of religion itself, than in the accomplishment of their favourite objects. It was the design of a former discourse to shew, that the Church of England, forming her idea of real Christian unity from the language of those Scriptures, to which she has steadily adhered, as the guide of her conduct, and the rule of her opinions, has employed every legitimate means in her power for its preservation. But the same wisdom which taught her how Christians should be one, enabled her also to discover, that, beyond a certain limit, it was neither safe nor right to seek their union; lest the substance itself should be lost in the pursuit of the shadow, and mutual peace should be promoted, not for the sake, but by the sacrifice, of truth.

The contests of which Christianity has been at least the pretext, if not the cause, may be ranked among the most furious and destructive which have visited the world; and, from its first promulgation to

the present hour, the folly of some, the pride and obstinacy of others, and the uncontrolled passions of the many, have presented insuperable impediments to the preservation of that unity, which it was our blessed Lord's desire to establish among his disciples. But ought we therefore to listen to any rash projector, who would persuade us to put Christianity itself to hazard, for the sake of ending the contentions by which it has been disgraced? Or should we conceive his scheme to be wise, or his motives to be pure, who would urge the propriety of conceding even one fundamental article of our creed, that the offence of those, who have presumed to question or deny it, might be speedily and effectually removed?

The answer to such questions may be safely anticipated. None will consent to renounce doctrines which they consider to be fundamental, in order to conciliate the errors or the prejudices of others; and all will probably determine to maintain what they conceive to be the common faith, as a possession far too precious to be relin-

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quished, because its perfect work among us has hitherto been impeded by the blindness and perversity of human nature.

It may then be assumed, that there is a price, at which even Christian unity, desirable and lovely as it is, would be too dearly purchased: that it is not the only thing, nor the chief thing, which we have to seek and provide; and that those who so esteem it, and risk even truth itself to procure it, are neither to be followed nor commended.

The language of our Saviour in the text may perhaps be not improperly applied to warn us against such projectors; as it declares, that there is a mode of gathering, which tends to scatter, rather than to unite; and that, whatever may be the motive of those who do not act with him, the effect of their conduct will be injurious to the work, which he came into the world to perform.

He had exposed the perverse misrepresentations, which attributed his miracles to demoniacal influence, by stating this simple and undeniable truth; that no plan

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can be accomplished, no power upheld, but by unity of effort. "Every kingdom "divided against itself is brought to deso- "lation; and every city or house divided "against itself shall not stand; and if Sa- "tan cast out Satan, he is divided against "himself; how shall then his kingdom "stand?"

Still further to shew the natural conse- quence of divisions, he reminds his hearers of an aphorism of their own, against the force of which they could take no excep- tion. "He that is not with me is against "me; and he that gathereth not with me "scattereth abroad;" leaving them to draw from it the following unavoidable infer- ence; that the conduct which they ad- mitted to be in general so injurious, was not likely to have been adopted on that particular occasion; that if nothing less than the steady and uniform direction of its power towards its own preservation can effectually promote the welfare of any go- vernment, Satan could not, without ab- surdity, be supposed to be so grossly neg- ligent of his own interests, as to divide

against himself, by providing his avowed adversary with weapons to overthrow his kingdom.

Assuming then that the proverbial saying thus objected by our Saviour to these Jewish cavillers, may be accommodated without impropriety to the subject before us, it will perhaps admit of being thus paraphrased. "He that is not with me," that is, he who does not act under my direction and authority, "is against me;" his labours, though apparently directed to the same end, are in fact opposed to mine; he divides those whom I would have collected in one, even while he seeks to gather them; and, by breaking down the fences of that one fold, which it is my design to form, he scatters the sheep, seducing them from my pastures, depriving them of my protection.

If we may be allowed thus to employ the language of the text, it will powerfully illustrate the fatal effects of those "labours "for peace," which are conducted under

c See Note CXXIX. Appendix.

the irregular impulse of private imaginations, rather than according to the dictates of Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

The event of many arduous conflicts, and of many a plausible, but unsuccessful plan for preventing their recurrence, has proved that the ministers of Christ can never properly discharge their sacred function, as the watchmen of Israel, the shepherds of Christ's flock, the stewards of his mysteries, unless they be convinced, that, however desirous they may feel to provide for "the things which make for peace," it is their first duty to maintain the truth; and that every project for uniting Christians upon any other terms has hitherto increased the evil which it was intended to remedy.

The historical evidence by which this position is supported may be arranged under three separate heads.

I. The first will include a cursory view of those projects, which have had for their object the reunion of Protestants and Papists.

II. Under the second may be ranked the

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attempts to restore unity among the different classes of Protestants in foreign countries.

III. The third may comprise the various plans which have been proposed for the reconciliation of the Church of England and her dissenting brethren.

This general view of the subject, while it enables us to ascertain the common principle upon which all these undertakings have been conducted, may perhaps suggest, in that principle, the cause of their failure, by ranking them under that species of gathering, which tends to scatter, rather than unite.

I. Of the efforts made by the Church of Rome to promote Christian unity little can be said, and that little must be unfavourable. To the repeated and earnest declarations of the Reformers, that they were anxious to prevent divisions, and to preserve the unity of the Church by any sacrifice which they could conscientiously make; she answered only by an haughty avowal of her determination to maintain the doctrines, which they disclaimed as un-

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scriptural; and to abide by the practices against which they protested as superstitious and idolatrous.

To their appeals in favour of primitive truth and discipline, she obstinately refused to listen; and their arguments she attempted to silence by the exertion of authority. She [d] wished indeed that Christians should be "all of one mind:" but it was an unanimous submission to her usurped supremacy, rather than to the faith of the Gospel, which she endeavoured to enforce.

The days of primitive suffering might have taught her the vanity of labouring to subdue the mind by torturing the body; and from the lives of those martyrs whom she affected to venerate, she might have learned to despise the folly, as well as to detest the cruelty, of religious persecutions. In the arrogance however of assumed infallibility, she refused to receive instruction from the experience of former ages; and the breach which prudent concession

[d] See Note CXXX. Appendix.

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might speedily have closed, her violence rendered irreparable. In this kingdom more particularly, it cannot be doubted that the Protestant cause was greatly promoted by the blind fury of its antagonists. The foundations of the fabric which our Reformers raised, were laid in knowledge and in piety; but they were cemented with blood: the light which their good works and indefatigable labours diffused, was steady and brilliant; but it was at the stake, and by the bright example of suffering for righteousness sake which they there exhibited, that they kindled that holy zeal for the true faith of the Gospel, which opposition has never since been able to quench.

From them did our excellent Church receive the sacred deposit, and while their memory adorns her annals, will she labour to preserve her precious charge, uncorrupted by the fraud, uninjured by the violence of its enemies.

But though such has been the spirit and

[a] See Note CXXXI. Appendix.

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conduct of the Roman Church, individuals have occasionally arisen in her communion, who have endeavoured, by the gentler methods of persuasion and argument, to restore the dominion of peace. Among their labours, the well known consultation of Cassander will ever hold a conspicuous place. Whatever may be thought of the principles on which this work is composed, there can be no doubt that its pious author was actuated by a sincere desire of restoring peace to the Christian world.

He doubtless thought, that the tenets of his Church fairly admitted of such an explanation, as might satisfy the scruples, and allay the fears of those, who had departed from her communion. But although it may be allowed, that he has conceded all which a consistent Romanist could grant, yet his concessions, even had they received the sanction of authority, fall far short of that, which a consistent Protestant must require. And while he thought himself obliged to insist on the supremacy of the

[f] See Note CXXXII. Appendix.

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Pope, as essential to the preservation of unity and order; the Reformers, who well knew how deeply injurious the admission of this claim had already proved, could not be expected to accede to his proposals. As a sincere advocate of peace, as earnestly desirous of restoring it upon terms, which he conceived to involve no sacrifice of truth, the name of George Cassander will ever stand high in the estimation of the pious and the good of every communion: and though his efforts were ineffectual; though they were never countenanced by his own Church; though he himself might be mistaken in his estimate of their beneficial tendency; yet, as an example of a spirit uninfluenced by the prejudices, untainted by the sophistry, and unembittered by the rancour which has too generally prevailed among the advocates of the Papacy, they should never be forgotten.

Far different is the judgment which we are compelled to pass upon the labours of Bossuet.[s] If indeed the cause of union

[s] See Note CXXXIII. Appendix.

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could be effectually served by sophistry and deception; if the interests of Christianity could be promoted by clothing error in the garb of truth; by persuading the unwary Protestant, that the grounds of his separation from the Roman communion were laid in misconception and misrepresentation; that her idolatries were only imaginary; that the practices, which her adversaries had denounced as superstitious, were innocent at least, if not laudable or useful; and that the doctrines, which they had rejected as unscriptural and antichristian, were only objected to because they were misunderstood: if success in such attempts could really benefit religion, or be acceptable to its divine founder, then might the exposition of Bossuet merit commendation: if otherwise, we may rejoice that in our own Church, and among our own prelates, a champion arose to detect the fallacies, and repel the attack of such an enemy.

While then such is the character, which the excellent Archbishop Wake has indelibly affixed to this celebrated work, we

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must still look in vain for any sincere attempt on the part of the Roman Church, to repair the evil consequences of her own obstinacy and error.

In a better spirit, though with mistaken ingenuity, did [h] Grotius endeavour to give effect to the labours of Cassander. His wish for peace, and his despair of effectually resisting the Papal power, evidently biassed him in favour of the Romish doctrines: but however we may pardon the motive which thus prevailed over his better judgment, yet we cannot lament that his project met with no support, and can be ranked only with the unprofitable speculations, to which many an active mind is occasionally devoted.

The only step towards a [i] negociation for reunion, upon terms alike beneficial to the cause of truth and peace, was taken by the same English Prelate, who so triumphantly repelled the sophistries of Bossuet. When the arrogance of the Roman Pontiff had provoked the Gallican Church

[h] See Note CXXXIV. Appendix.
[i] See Note CXXXV. Appendix.

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to resist a tyranny which it could no longer bear, the venerable primate stood forward as became his character and station; and to the overtures of reconciliation made by some leading divines of that Church, he answered in the genuine spirit of apostolic unity. The correspondence which took place on this occasion has been preserved, and it proves that, although sincerely desirous of a union upon proper principles, he never would have consented to any infringement upon the independence of our national Church; far less to the compromise of those fundamental truths, which it is her duty to preserve. That such an opportunity was lost, must be attributed to causes which neither affect the character of our Church nor of its primate. She may justly assert, that the moderation which has always distinguished her was not then forgotten; and that another instance was thus afforded of the prudence which has ever enabled her to combine an undeviating resistance of error, with a spirit of brotherly kindness and charity towards those by whom it is maintained.

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While these ineffectual attempts to restore that unity, which the corruptions of the Church of Rome and the arrogance of its Pontiffs had destroyed, served only more strongly to mark the line of distinction between error and truth, by contrasting the conduct, as well as the arguments of their supporters; similar efforts to reduce the leading Protestant persuasions in foreign countries to one common form of communion proved equally unsuccessful.

The points of difference between the Lutherans and the Calvinists were neither few nor unimportant; and though apparently of a speculative nature, they involved fundamental doctrines, and in their consequences could not but affect the practice, as well as the faith, of their advocates.[k]

The peculiar doctrines of Calvin respecting the divine decrees, were regarded with detestation by the Lutherans: while, on the other hand, their opinions relative to the person of Christ; the nature, efficacy,

[k] See Note CXXXVI. Appendix.

and necessity of baptism; and the real presence in the eucharist, were rejected with equal warmth by the Calvinists. When such were the subjects of discussion, it was not to be expected that the labours of a few individuals, however able or zealous in the cause they undertook, could so far conquer prejudices, or reconcile antipathies, as to unite the jarring disputants in the bonds of Christian fellowship and brotherly love. The obstacles, which the mere infirmities of human nature must ever oppose to such an attempt, were of themselves sufficiently formidable; but could they have been surmounted, these various plans were so radically defective, that no real advantages to the cause of Christianity could have resulted from their success. Deeply impressed with the value of peace, and enthusiastic in their pursuit of it, the authors of the various Irenica[1] which were published at this period seem to have been careless of the price at which it was to be obtained; and when they proposed a

[1] See Note CXXXVII. Appendix.

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system of mutual concession, or the adoption of some middle terms, by which the opposite parties might be outwardly united, without renouncing those conflicting opinions, which had occasioned their separation; they seem to have forgotten that Christian love must be [m] "without dissimulation;" and that, while the seeds of enmity are cherished in the heart, antipathies are rendered more deadly by the necessity of concealment. If however these reconcilers had so far succeeded in their labours, as to produce a general conviction, that Lutherans and Calvinists, in all their various modifications, might each hold their opinions in peace, for that the peculiarities of both were equally unessential; still it was at least possible, that such a persuasion might have been more really [n] injurious than the contentions which it terminated. Whether indeed their object, had it been attainable, would have secured those blessings to Christendom, or raised that bulwark to Protestantism which they

[m] Rom. xii. 9. [n] See Note CXXXVIII. Appendix.

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fondly expected, may best be determined by those, who consider the effects produced by apathy and indifference upon the human mind. For may it not be asserted, that the mutual indulgence which they inculcated is as incompatible with any other state of feeling, as a general respect for all modes of faith is destructive of real attachment to the one true doctrine contained in the Scriptures?

III. While the truth of Christianity was thus inconsiderately hazarded in foreign countries, by the advocates of union; the Church of England was not without her full share of the calamities, which such attempts, when made by injudicious or ill designing projectors, will seldom fail to produce. Peace and unity were the professed objects of some of her bitterest enemies. To establish "such an uniformity "in religion, as might enable them and "their posterity after them to live as "brethren in faith and love," was the avowed intention of those conspirators against the Church and their lawful sovereign, who imposed "the solemn

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"League and Covenant" upon their deluded countrymen at the commencement of the great rebellion. [p] "That the Lord "might be one, and his name one in the "three kingdoms," they proceeded to destroy all existing establishments, and remove every barrier which had been erected to preserve the purity and the unity of the faith. They swept the national Church with [q] "the besom of destruction;" they abolished her Liturgy and her discipline; they drove her clergy from their cures; and sanctioned the rhapsodies of every fanatical preacher, who was willing to pervert the Scriptures to the purposes of faction, and teach the abettors of rebellion, sacrilege, and murder, that they were doing God service, and promoting the establishment of his kingdom.

The consequences of such a system may

[o] See Note CXXXIX. Appendix.

[p] See Clarendon's History of the Rebellion, b. vii. vol. 2. p. 287. folio.

[q] Isaiah xiv. 23.

[r] See Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, part i.

[s] See Note CXL. Appendix.

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be best set forth in the language of those, who, after labouring long and zealously in its support, lived to see and to confess their error. One of them thus proclaims the result of his own observation. "As in "commonwealths, where the bands and "sinewes of civil government are cut "asunder, and no conjunction or associ- "ating of a people into or under govern- "ment, politicians say, that in such times "*every man is at warre with every man*, "*every man is an enemy to every man*; so "the Lord for our sinnes hath poured "this evill upon us, that we lye in confu- "sion, almost every man is divided from "every man, and so deepe hath the ma- "lady taken root, that many are in love "with it, and like their very divisions; "and as it is in popular tumults, *no man* "*will heare any man*, but still the confused "noise goes on; so in truth is it with us, "we are not willing to heare of agreement, "he is almost an enemy, who would la- "bour a pacification or reconciliation."[1]

[1] Stephen Marshall's Spittle Sermon, April 1652. See also Note CXLI. Appendix.

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Such then was the effect of this great effort to restore unity, peace, and concord, by removing ancient landmarks, and confounding the distinction between truth and error, in order to prevent the disputes they had occasioned. The remedy indeed was powerful, but in its operation it was found to be far more fatal than the disease for which it was prescribed; and they who had blindly concurred in the work of destruction soon found, that, by abolishing the apostolic form of Church government, they had exposed the faith itself to the assaults of its worst enemies; and that instead of promoting peace by their indiscreet and unwarrantable concessions, they had justified discontent, and legalized resistance.

It might have been supposed, that the miseries and horrors which attended this attempt to gather together on one those, whom differences of opinion upon fundamental points rendered wholly irreconcileable, would have taught wisdom to succeeding generations. They might have learned from the sufferings of others, how

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truly it was said, that [a] "the cheating noise "and name of unity hath been the great di- "vider of the Christian world;" and instead of being deluded by a more outward shew of harmony, they might have known, that no religious union can be permanent or beneficial, unless it be established upon the basis of [x] "one Lord, one faith, and "one baptism." Then would they have ceased from vain endeavours to gather, where no harvest was prepared; to unite, where no affinities existed; and they would never have hazarded the best interests of that Church, which they had solemnly pledged themselves to support, by fruitless projects to conciliate those, whose conduct had already proved, that they would be satisfied by nothing less than her destruction.

The remembrance of the [y] "bitter envy- "ings, and strife," and divisions, which ensued among themselves, when the only bond of their union was broken by the downfall of that Church which they had

[a] Baxter's Cure for Church Divisions, p. 276.

[x] Ephes. iv. 5. [y] James iii. 14.

associated to overthrow, might have instructed the wiser and more moderate of the dissenters also to study the things that make for peace, rather than to seek for the preeminence at the risk of utter destruction: and when the Church was once more restored to her ancient supremacy, to be contented with the tranquil shelter of that toleration which she was ever ready to afford them.

The rest however, which would have resulted from such discriminating prudence on the part of her own members, and such a wise forbearance in those who had separated from her communion, the Church has not hitherto been permitted to enjoy. Scarcely was she emancipated from the grinding tyranny of those whom "the so-"lemn League and Covenant" had armed against her; scarcely had she seen her prelates reinstated in their dignities, and her clergy recalled to the discharge of their pastoral office; scarcely did her churches again resound to the hallowed strains of her venerable Liturgy, and her members were once more fed with the pure and un-

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adulterated word of God, when the contest was again renewed, and she was called upon to defend that godly quietness, now happily restored within her own pale, against the advocates of unity without uniformity, and peace without reconciliation.

From that time to the present has the struggle been maintained: various indeed have been the devices of the enemy, but the ultimate object has uniformly been the same; the removal of every defence erected for the preservation of the Establishment, that the ministry of the Church might once more be opened to those, who have plainly declared that they would neither conform to her ritual, submit to her discipline, nor inculcate her doctrine.

This design, carried on by some who professed themselves anxious for the welfare and security of the Church, derived at least an apparent [z] sanction from the rule for interpreting her Articles laid down by a celebrated Prelate in his well known Exposition. This rule seemed to allow

[z] See Note CXLII. Appendix.

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those diversities of opinion, which the Articles themselves were framed to prevent; by encouraging persons of opposite tenets to believe, that each might possibly find a shelter under some ambiguity in their language, and that they might be subscribed without prevarication, in any sense which might be affixed to them by the ingenuity of the subscriber.

Under the influence of the same persons, whose benevolent but mistaken views this Exposition thus seemed to favour, a [a] Comprehension was also projected, as the best remedy for the evils of religious disunion: and that every obstacle to this attempt might be removed on the part of the Church, it had been proposed, that the Liturgy should undergo a new revision, for the purpose of altering or removing every passage which might offend the scruples of those, by whom it had been hitherto rejected. And as this could not be speedily or easily effected, evasions of the laws, which rendered conformity to the esta-

[a] See Note CXLIII. Appendix.

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blished Church a necessary qualification for places of political trust or employment, were openly defended; and occasional conformity was justified, as an expedient by which the restrictions of the Test Act might be conveniently and profitably relaxed.[b]

The vigilant opposition of the great majority of the clergy prevented the evils which would probably have resulted from the success of the former scheme; but it was not until after a long and persevering contest, that the practice of occasional conformity, which the conscientious dissenters themselves hesitated to defend, was prohibited by legislative interference. The silent indifference with which all these efforts were regarded by those whom they were intended to conciliate, sufficiently evinced their fruitlessness and vanity. It was not comprehension at which they aimed, but supremacy; and if in any instance they supported some of their adherents in an occasional conformity to the ritual of

[b] See Note CXLIV. Appendix.

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the Church, it was that the political interests of the body might be promoted, by their participation in civil authority.

But although this project wholly failed as a measure of union, yet it afforded another illustration of our Saviour's declaration, that "he who gathereth not with "him scattereth abroad." The enemies of the Church were neither softened nor conciliated, but the seeds of dissension were sown within her own bosom. The ingenuity which was employed to shew that many different meanings might be attached to her Articles, rather than to determine their true interpretation, rendered them a subject of unceasing contention, instead of a bond of unity; and the [c] arguments urged in defence of the occasional conformists inculcated a persuasion, that all modes of Christian worship and Church government are rather matters of ecclesiastical ordinance than of divine institution; and that the public devotions of every communion are equally acceptable to God, pro-

[c] See Note CXLV. Appendix.

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vided those who partake in them are sincere in their intention.

These unscriptural positions, afterwards sanctioned and defended by the dignified station and polemical ability of [d] Bp. Hoadley, gave rise to that long protracted struggle, in which the enemies of episcopacy were gratified by the unseemly spectacle of the inferior clergy arrayed against a bishop, in support of the Christian priesthood, and the fundamental doctrines of its religion.

Over such disputes, during which the cause of truth itself was too often equally disgraced by the assaults of its enemies and the bitterness of its defenders, we would willingly draw a veil; were it not that the history of former errors may teach those who study it to avoid the conduct they disapprove, and the angry feelings they deplore. Let it not be forgotten also, that to this very controversy the Church is indebted for the most powerful defence of her apostolic constitution, which her li-

[d] See Note CXLVI. Appendix.

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terary annals can produce. The Letters of Law will long preserve the memory of that struggle which occasioned them; and now, when the passions it excited are forgotten, and the combatants whom it called into the field are mingled with the dust; to them may the theological student be confidently referred for information, which will teach him at once to venerate and defend that Church, among whose ministers he aspires to be enrolled.

With similar unwillingness to commemorate the failings of those who are now called to their account, would I pass over the ill advised petitions against subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles, which the wisdom of the legislature rejected in the latter part of the last century. Feelings of affection for our excellent Church, and of godly jealousy for the collective character of her ministers, will ever oblige us to lament, that even a few of her clergy should have been then found, so far forgetful of their duty to her and to themselves, as publicly to express an anxiety to be relieved from the obligations, which they had vo-

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luntarily contracted to maintain her doctrines.

But to such conduct the present subject would not have required me even to allude, had not the advocates for these petitions seriously defended their object, as calculated to strengthen the Church of England, by lessening the number of her opponents.

To such perverted reasoning it is now unnecessary to reply; as matter of history, the measure itself cannot be entirely forgotten; and it will remain as one proof among many, that injudicious attempts to establish the semblance of unity and peace will ever scatter strife and dissension even among those, who, but for such interference, might have walked together as friends. While however we lament the mistakes from which such evils have arisen, let us not hastily impute to those, who laboured under them, an obliquity of motive, to which, no doubt, the hearts of many were wholly strangers: let us rather believe,

[e] See Note CXLVII. Appendix.

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that, ardent in the pursuit of one of the greatest blessings which Christianity was designed to produce, they considered not the proper means of securing their object; than that they delighted in the confusion and disorder, which their ill digested plans were but too well calculated to produce.

From the evidence which the history of the Church, from the period of the Reformation, appears to furnish, what inferences then are to be drawn? We have seen that the efforts which have been made at different times, and by various individuals, to establish peace and unity among the professors of a religion which breathes nothing but harmony and love, have not only failed, but have increased the evil they were intended to remedy. Shall we then suppose, that he who earnestly prayed that his Church might be one, has rendered unity really unattainable? or that, while he has commanded us to study the things which make for peace, he has ordained that obedience to his will shall promote the cause of disunion? May we not rather conceive, that schemes so uniformly unsuc-

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cessful have also been radically defective; and that the cause of their disappointment is to be traced in the erroneous principles on which they were framed? Shall we not be induced to conclude, that their advocates, however sincere in their intentions, were mistaken in their conduct; and that the union which they sought was incompatible with the welfare of that religion, with whose institutions it was to be interwoven?

If the foundations of real Christian unity are only to be laid in Christian truth; then are those only to be accounted its promoters, who in the true spirit of the Apostle's admonition, [f] "contend earnestly for "the faith once delivered to the saints:" if our blessed Lord, when he petitioned for the unity of his disciples, intended that they should be one, not as men only, but as Christians; as professors of one faith, members of one holy Catholic Church, and servants of one Master; no reconciliation founded upon hollow compromises and insincere concessions can be framed according

[f] Jude 3.

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to his will. They who thus gather, seek not the pure and perfect peace of genuine Christianity; they have contented themselves with attempting to purchase a mere cessation of hostilities by the indulgence of error; and, instead of strengthening the bulwarks of that Church, which was intended to be the guardian of the truth, they have rather leagued with its adversaries to promote her overthrow.

Little consolation will it prove to her defenders to be convinced, that they desired not the ruin which they thus contributed to produce; and that they were unconscious of the mischievous tendency of their ill directed labours. It imports not, that they [g] "prayed for the peace of "Jerusalem," or that they toiled for its restoration. It is to the effect, and not the design of their labour which we are to look, if we would learn wisdom from the page of history. Let it not then be said, that we delight in recording the failings of those who have preceded us; or that we in-

[g] Psalm cxxii. 6.

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dulge in censure, where it can no longer be repelled. We judge them not, we condemn them not: with humble confidence in the justice and the mercy of him, before whose tribunal they are called, we hope that on that awful day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, no perversity of will, no voluntary blindness may be laid to their charge. But, though we [h] "judge "nothing before the time," it is our duty to inquire what was the fruit of their exertions. And if by this criterion we may ascertain, that they [i] "laboured in vain, and "spent their strength for nought;" where will be our excuse, if we neglect to profit by the example which has perhaps been recorded for our admonition? what shall we plead in our defence, if, by seeking to gather as they did, we also be found to have scattered abroad?

But if we would learn the whole of that lesson which such an investigation may be capable of teaching, it will become us to consider the effects of these pacific efforts

[h] 1 Cor. iv. 5. [i] Isaiah xlix. 4.

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in all their bearings. We shall find, it is to be feared, that their evil consequences have not been limited to the disappointment which has been experienced by their authors, nor to the temporary increase of bitterness and contention which has generally attended their progress.

When the advocates of peace persuaded themselves, that some latitude of interpretation, even on important points, might fairly be allowed for the sake of reconciling conflicting opinions, that those who could not agree in discipline, might compromise their differences by uniformity in doctrine; or that, where the same form of ecclesiastical government was preserved, doctrinal points should not be too severely investigated; they raised their hands to remove the barriers of the faith, and exposed the sanctuary of Christianity to the inroad of its adversaries.

It may be granted, that the first concessions were, in themselves, comparatively unimportant; that Cassander would not have surrendered what he considered to

[k] See Note CXLVIII. Appendix.

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be the apostolic constitution of the Church; nor [1] Grotius, what he believed to be the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel: but certain it is, that those who followed in the track which they had marked out, imitated neither their moderation nor their caution. Too soon did it become apparent, that where peace was the great object of desire, every doctrine which had occasioned dispute would be surrendered as unimportant; and our holy faith itself would soon be resolved into that cold system of philosophic deism, which has been dignified with the title of uncontroverted Christianity.

Such was the tendency of that system, which declared, that "a man's title to God's "favour cannot depend upon his actual "being or continuing in any particular "method, but upon his real sincerity in "the conduct of his conscience:"—a position, which, could it have been established, would have removed at once the ground of every controversy, and provided an effectual remedy for religious dis-

[1] See Note CXLVIII. Appendix.

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session, by involving the faith, the worship, and the discipline of the Church in one common ruin.

Such attempts have indeed met with opponents, acute in discovering, and active in repelling the danger which they menaced. But let it not be supposed, that they were harmless, because they were defeated. The Church has hitherto, by the blessing of God, survived the contest; but she has suffered from the struggle. The advocates of truth have retired conquerors from the field of controversy; but the number of those who rejoiced in their triumphs has, it is to be feared, rather diminished than increased. Argument, however in itself convincing, can seldom effectually arrest the progress of popular delusion: for error accommodates itself to minds, which are impervious to truth; and the plausible sophistries of its teachers will be greedily adopted by those, who have neither inclination to receive, nor ability to comprehend the deductions of reason. Hence have the unthinking and unwary been taught to regard the resolute defend-

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ers of primitive truth and order with an eye of suspicion or dislike, as the real disturbers of the Christian world; and, wearied with the contests, which the continual incursions of the enemy have rendered unavoidable, they have hailed the tranquillity of indifference, as their only refuge from the turbulence of controversy, and the rancour of polemical disputation.

Such then is the great, the growing evil with which we have to contend. The sanctuary of the Church of England is yet inviolate, her doctrines uncorrupted, her constitution unimpaired: surrounded as she is by enemies, and exposed to dangers, she still cherishes within her bosom a host of defenders, of integrity unimpeached, of vigilance unwearied, in ability preeminent. Where then, it may be said, is the ground for apprehension or alarm? Alas! when Absalom had [m] stolen away the hearts of the men of Israel; and the multitude, who should have ranged themselves on the side of David, turned and fought against him; little did it profit him, that his title was le-

[m] 2 Samuel xv. 6.

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gitimate, or that his chosen friends were loyal and brave. And little, it is to be feared, will it avail our excellent Church, that she is sound in the faith, if the love of her members have waxed cold; or that her clergy are able and zealous, if a prevailing lukewarmness have deadened the hearts of their flocks against the influence of their ministrations.

It is this general indifference, the fatal offspring of ill regulated attempts to secure a blessing at present unattainable, which awakens our fears, and too often palsies our exertions. He whose word is truth has declared, "that a kingdom divided "against itself falleth." Where then divisions are to be found, little does it matter, whether they are caused by open hostility, or encouraged by passive neutrality; their existence, in either case, is incompatible with the safety of that spiritual kingdom committed to our charge; and it becomes us to be prepared to remedy the latter evil, as we are, I trust, yet fully competent to resist the former.

That then the zeal of those who are

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professedly members of our venerable establishment may be neither cooled by indifference nor misdirected by enthusiasm, let us be ourselves examples of that steady perseverance and indefatigable watchfulness, which we would recommend: let us endeavour to convince them, that the peace they covet is not to be attained, as they have been unwarily prevailed on to seek it; and that real union never can be purchased by concessions made to the sons of confusion and disorder. Let us remind them, that God alone can [m] "tame the "unruly wills and affections of his sinful "creatures;" and that it is his peculiar province, to [n] "make men of one mind in "an house." If then they look forward with hope to that day, when it shall please him to build up his kingdom upon earth [o] "in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the "Holy Ghost;" if they are anxious to prepare the way for its establishment, their duty has been plainly marked out in the Scriptures; they must [p] "continue in the faith

[m] Collect, fourth Sunday after Easter.
[n] Liturgy. [o] Rom. xiv. 17. [p] Col. i. 23. ii. 7.

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"as they have been taught," and take care that their [q] "conversation be such as "becometh the Gospel of Christ;" ever bearing in mind the declaration of the [r] Apostle, that they who would live in peace must first be perfectly united in the common faith, and then "the God of love "and peace will be with them."

[q] Phil. i. 27.

[r] 2 Cor. xiii. 11. See Hammond's interpretation of καταρτιζομαι. Also Elsner, as quoted by Schleusner, and his own explanation of 1 Cor. i. 10.

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SERMON VIII.

JOHN x. 16.

Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

THE careful investigator of revealed truth will not fail to be struck with many passages in the sacred canon, which point to a state of moral and religious perfection hitherto without example in the world; when Christianity shall obtain its due influence over the opinions and conduct of mankind, and the fruit of [a] "righteousness "shall be peace, and the effect of righte- "ousness quietness and assurance." Such predictions will furnish him with a reply to those sophists, who would depreciate our holy faith, by insidiously comparing the

[a] Isaiah xxxii. 17.

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external result of its precepts with the greatness of its pretensions; and profess their inability to conceive, that the Son of God would descend from heaven, to establish a religion apparently so feeble in its moral operations, and hitherto received by so inconsiderable a portion of those, whose present comfort and eternal salvation it was confessedly designed to promote.

It may indeed be justly urged, in reply to these suggestions, that the real advantages derived to man from the incarnation and sufferings of his Saviour, would be very inadequately represented by a mere view of the outward circumstances of Christians. The ameliorating and sanctifying influence of our holy religion; its powers of restraint and encouragement; the comforts and the joys which it imparts; cannot be fully appreciated, but by tracing it in the privacy of domestic habits; in the character and conduct of those who are least known and regarded by the world; in the closet of the penitent, in the house of the mourner, or the chamber of the diseased. It may also be remarked, that

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no conclusive argument against the beneficial effects of Christianity can be drawn from the comparatively limited sphere of its acceptation among the nations of the earth. For it would not perhaps be difficult to shew, that many parts, even of the heathen world, are now partakers in temporal benefits, which are the legitimate fruit of Christianity; and we are by no means justified in imagining, that those only to whom the Gospel has been preached, will profit by the sacrifice of atonement made by him, who is [b] "the Saviour of all "men," but in a more especial manner of those that believe. The [c] wisdom of God may have determined to render the cross of Christ available, though in a manner incomprehensible to us, to the salvation of those, who have not been permitted to hear the glad tidings of his coming. And, without presuming to decide upon a subject not clearly revealed, our confidence in that justice and mercy inseparable from the divine nature, should prevent us from

[b] 1 Tim. iv. 10. [c] See Note CXLIX. Appendix.

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forming any conclusions, which may even seem to derogate from the perfection of these attributes.

Still however it may be allowed, that, if we limit our consideration to the visible effects of our holy faith, neither the records of history, nor the testimony of actual experience, can warrant our belief, that the reign of the Messias has yet been attended by all its predicted temporal blessings; and we are irresistibly impelled to conclude, that a far more widely extended reception of his Gospel, a far more beneficial operation of his commandments, is to be expected. The encouragement, which appears to be given by the language of holy Writ to this expectation, has indeed been often abused. Of the [d] theories which have been built upon it, some have been in the highest degree extravagant and [e] mischievous, giving the reins to every inordinate propensity of the human heart, and sapping the foundations of all established authority, whether civil or re-

[d] See Note CL. Appendix.
[e] See Note CLI. Appendix.

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rigious; while others, though less injurious in their tendency, have partaken more of visionary speculation, than was consistent with the sober interpretation of revealed truth. But without dwelling upon the sinful absurdities, which have rendered the former class abominable in the view of every pious and intelligent Christian; or further particularizing the opinions of good and learned, though fanciful writers, who have perhaps awakened a prejudice in the minds of some, even against the truth itself, which their exaggerations have disfigured; it is an historical fact, that in every age of the Church a belief has prevailed, that a time of greater doctrinal and moral perfection was approaching; in which Christianity should shine forth with a lustre as yet unknown, and its professors should be perfectly united in faith and affection.

To such a period, the language of our Saviour in the text appears to direct our attention: "Other sheep I have, which "are not of this fold: them also must I "bring, and they shall hear my voice;

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"and there shall be one fold, and one "shepherd." May we not be allowed to paraphrase this passage thus? I have disciples whom ye yet know not: they belong not indeed to the Jewish Church or nation, but their hearts are prepared for my doctrine; and when they are called by the ministry of my Apostles and their successors, they also shall hear my voice, [f] "receiving the word" with gladness and "readiness of mind," and submitting themselves, in all sincerity of faithful obedience, to my directions. "Them also "must I bring;" they shall be [g] added to my Church: and when this great work is completed, and these Gentiles are wholly brought in; then shall the influence of my Gospel be fully manifested in the harmony of its professors; and all being perfectly joined together in the profession of the same faith, and in obedience to the same form of external polity, there shall be henceforth but "one fold," as there is but "one shepherd."

[f] Acts xvii. 11. [g] See Note CLII. Appendix.

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Viewing then the text in this light, to what period in the annals of Christianity shall we look for its accomplishment? We know that when the [h] "blindness" which had "happened in part to Israel," and had closed the minds of God's once chosen people against the doctrine of salvation, obliged the Apostles to [i] "turn to the "Gentiles," they traversed every region of the then civilized world, proclaiming the glad tidings of the Gospel; making converts, founding churches, and thus extending the spiritual dominion of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. We know also, how rapid was the growth of that seed which they planted; that, even under the most discouraging circumstances, it flourished and spread; until, like the [k] grain of mustard in the parable, it became a great tree, and nations reposed under its shadow. Still, however, this influence, so soon obtained, so widely extended, though wonderful in itself, and strongly attesting the overruling provi-

[h] Romans xi. 25.
[i] Acts xiii. 46.
[k] Matthew xiii. 32.

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dence of him, who giveth the hearing ear and the understanding heart, fills not up the idea which the language of the text suggests. For though other sheep were brought in, and the [l] "redeemed of the "Lord were gathered out of all lands, "from the east and from the west, from "the north and from the south;" though all agreed in acknowledging one common shepherd, even Jesus Christ, in whose name they had believed; yet when can it be said that the fold has been one? Can we trace the unity which such a declaration would induce us to expect in the contests of the first Christians, when the Jewish convert was arrayed against his Gentile brother; the one, insisting upon the burdensome ceremonies of his own abrogated ritual; the other, not only rejecting these [m] "beggarly elements," as they were styled by St. Paul, but unchanitably despising those, by whose inherited prejudices they were upheld?

Or shall we seek this unity in any par-

[l] Psalm cvii. 2, 3. [m] Galatians iv. 9.

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ticular church, which the Apostles founded? [n] "Envying, strife, and divisions" banished it from Corinth. Of the Galatians, many, even under the great Apostle's inspection, were ready to [o] "bite and devour "one another." To the Ephesians, he was obliged strongly to urge the duty of [p] "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the "bond of peace;" and his monitory exhortations to the [q] Philippians and [r] Colossians, as well as the anxiety which he expressed for the spiritual confirmation of the [s] Thessalonians, all tend to prove, that the sons of confusion had already commenced their disorganizing labours.

As we descend, the prospect darkens before us; and the last testimony borne by the sacred records to the state of Christianity, prepares us but too well for the discord, which marks the later periods of ecclesiastical history. Of the [t] seven churches addressed in the Apocalypse, two only are exempted from the censure of having in

[n] 1 Cor. iii. 3. [o] Gal. v. 15. [p] Eph iv. 3.
[q] Phil. iii. 2. [r] Col. ii. 4. et seq.
[s] 1 Thess. iii. [t] Apoc. ii. iii.

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some degree departed from the purity and unity of the faith. Heresies had deformed the doctrine, and idolatries polluted the worship, of the remaining five.

From that period to the present, where shall we discover such an uniform adoption of the same doctrine, such mutual charity, such tranquil submission to one system of discipline, as seem requisite to the full accomplishment of our Saviour's prediction? Many indeed have been the temporal benefits conferred upon the world by Christianity; and however the vices or the passions of mankind may have counteracted its influence, these benefits are still perceptible wherever its knowledge has been extended. But its full effect has, perhaps, never yet been witnessed: and while it continues to be in itself a source of bitterness and envy, of contests and divisions; while its professors are separated from each other, by almost every possible modification of belief, and agree in little else, besides a nominal acknowledgment of one common Saviour; we must either be induced by past experience to conclude,

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that real Christian unity is a blessing, which man in this present life is incapable of enjoying; or we must look forward in hope to some appointed time, when he, who knows how to bring order out of confusion, shall say unto these unruly waves, "Peace, be still;" and the tempest of conflicting opinions shall subside into a calm at his command.

It will be the object of the present discourse,

I. First to lay some ground of scriptural authority, on which the latter opinion may be supported.

II. Secondly to consider the duties which devolve on those, who cherish such an expectation.

I. The different prophecies which have been supposed by learned interpreters to bear upon this subject, if separately considered, would lead to an investigation, on which the limits of this discourse do not allow me to enter. It may be sufficient to bring forward one remarkable prediction of Isaiah; which, after all due allowance is

[u] Mark iv. 39.

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made for the bold and figurative language of the Prophet, will still be found, so wholly inapplicable to any known state of society, that we are, in a manner, compelled to look forward to ages yet to come, for its accomplishment. And, thus viewed, it will appear to justify the hope, which has been so generally and so fondly cherished, that the prayer of our Saviour shall finally prevail; that his disciples shall be all one; and the divinity of his mission shall be manifested to the world, not only by the excellence of his doctrine, or the testimony of those who were witnesses of his miracles; but by its effect upon the hearts and conversation of his followers; by their perfect unity and mutual affection.

In the eleventh chapter of his prophecy, after describing the qualifications, the conduct, and the character of the Messiah, the inspired writer thus represents the effect of that religion, which this mysterious personage was to promulgate. "The wolf "also shall dwell with the lamb, and the "leopard shall lie down with the kid; and "the calf, and the young lion, and the

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"fatling together; and a little child shall "lead them. And the cow and the bear "shall feed; their young ones shall lie down "together: and the lion shall eat straw like "the ox. And the sucking child shall play "on the hole of the asp, and the weaned "child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' "den." These highly poetical expressions have received the same interpretation from every Christian commentator. To all they have appeared to describe the final influence of that religion of purity and love, which was to reform the evil, and civilize the ferocious; that religion, by whose sanctifying power, sin, the great cause of human misery, was to be vanquished; and those turbulent passions of the natural man, from whence come [x] "va- "riance, emulations, and wrath," as well as "seditions and heresies," were to be brought under subjection to the commandments of the God of peace. If this religion has not yet brought forth such fruits; if it has hitherto proved a cause of contention, rather than the harbinger of unani-

[x] Galatians v. 20.

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mity; shall we therefore doubt its efficacy? Or shall we presume to suppose, that God is [y] "slack concerning his promise," because all things yet continue in their former state of disunion? Rather let us believe, that the promise itself is suspended upon conditions as yet unfulfilled: let us be convinced, that Christianity has not yet worked [z] "peace on earth," only because its precepts are not yet fully known, its sanctions are not yet universally acknowledged.

The prophet himself seems to encourage us in looking forward to a future day; when, dropping in part the language of metaphor, he proceeds to say, [a] "They "shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy "mountain: for the earth shall be full of "the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters "cover the sea." When then the truths of our holy religion shall have been thus diffused and accepted; when the stony hearts of the hitherto untutored barbarians shall have been softened, and from them God shall have raised up [b] "children unto

[y] 2 Peter iii. 9.
[z] Luke ii. 14.
[a] Isa. xi. 9.
[b] Matt. iii. 9.

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"Abraham," as he has already done from us; when the words of the Psalmist shall have been fulfilled, and the Son shall have received [c] "the heathen for his inheritance, "and the uttermost parts of the earth for "his possession;" when [d] "all nations shall "flow unto the mountain of the Lord's "house;" when they who have not yet heard the name of Christ shall [e] "kneel "before him;" and they who now imperfectly and ignorantly worship him shall become truly his disciples: then shall *that* come to pass which is written in the prophecy of Zephaniah; [f] "God shall turn "unto the people a pure language, that "they may all call upon the name of the "Lord, to serve him with one consent." The days of injury and destruction, of strife and contention, shall have an end. The churches shall find rest as at the first; and [g] "walking in the fear of the Lord, "and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, "they shall be multiplied."

How or when this great event shall take

[c] Psalm ii. 8. [d] Micah iv. 1. [e] Psalm lxxii. 9.
[f] Zeph. iii. 9. [g] Acts ix. 31.

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place, we have not been informed: but it is worthy of remark, that concord and unity are ever represented in the Scriptures as the attendants of Christian knowledge; the knowledge, not of the head only, but of the heart; that true practical wisdom, which has been emphatically termed [h] "the fear of the Lord." When the love of this knowledge fully prevails; when men shall have learned to [i] "lay aside all ma-"lice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and "envyings, and all evil speakings, and to "desire the sincere milk of the word that "they may grow thereby;" then shall religion have her perfect work; the fruit of righteousness shall flourish and abound; and the [k] "peace of God shall keep the "hearts and minds of all his worshippers "through Christ Jesus."

Then may the saying of our Saviour in the text be fulfilled. And as all agree in obedience to "one shepherd," so may all be united in one common fold; that apostolic Church, within whose pale the faith,

[h] Prov. i. 7. [i] 1 Pet. ii. 1. [k] Phil. iv. 7.

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which its inspired founders taught, has been preserved; the sacraments, which they delivered as of divine institution, have been duly administered; and the form of government, which they appointed, has ever been maintained.

Thus will the disciples of Jesus Christ be one, even as he is one with his Father: one, not in outward seeming, but in inward verity; one, not by fortuitous collection in the same place; not by the mere nominal distinction of their common calling; not by a temporary association for some secondary purpose; not by a compromise of irreconcileable differences, or a covenanted indifferenee to all which had hitherto divided them; but one in faith, in loyalty, in holiness, in charity. They shall [1] "love as brethren," because as brethren they have learned to reverence the same God and Father of all, to live as members of one spiritual family, and to conform in sincerity to its institutions; because, in one word, they have been taught to submit their

[1] 1 Peter iii. 8.

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understanding to the instruction, and their will to the commandments of him, whom they call their Master; even Jesus Christ, their Redeemer and their God.

II. Having thus shewn, that our expectation of this event is founded upon scriptural authority; I am next to inquire, what are the duties which Christians, animated by such hopes, may be called upon to perform.

We know that they who seek for blessings from the hand of God are not only required to pray with entire confidence in his power and goodness, but also diligently to [m] use every lawful method of procuring for themselves the object of their petitions. [n] "The husbandman that la-"boureth is partaker of the fruits." And though, to attribute our success in any pursuit entirely to our own prudent and skilful employment of secondary means, without any regard to that overruling Providence, whose blessing alone can render human skill or prudence available to its

[m] See Note CLIII. Appendix. [n] 2 Tim. ii. 6.

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object would savour of impious presumption; on the other hand, to believe that God will hear the prayer of the slothful, or that he will assist us when we endeavour not to help ourselves, is the part of folly or fanaticism. If then it is allowed us to pray for the peace of our Jerusalem, doubtless we may also lawfully endeavour to promote its establishment; and while we look forward with eager longing to the time, when all Christians shall be united, not only [p] "in word or in tongue, "but in deed and in truth;" it certainly becomes us to put away from us all which can occasion divisions, and to cultivate, by every due method, that unity which we desire.

The well instructed and consistent friend of Christian peace will however be careful, that his zeal to promote it injures not the cause which he desires to serve. He will therefore patiently wait for the accomplishment of those promises, from whence his hopes derive their origin; and he will diligently employ himself in the defence of

[p] 1 John iii. 18.

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the truth, knowing that real unity can be built upon no other foundation.

The failure of every previous attempt to accelerate the approach of that blessed period to which we are allowed to look forward, will sufficiently teach such a man the duty of patience. In the miseries which have been already produced by these hasty and intemperate projects, he will perceive the evil of disregarding the means, and looking only to the end; and he will learn the folly and the guilt of sacrificing the blessings which we possess, for untried and speculative advantages. He will not think so meanly of divine Providence, as to believe, that its purposes can only be accomplished by the irregular exertions of man's unrighteous zeal; nor will he suppose, that God, who has given us a law by which our conduct is to be guided, will be pleased with those who deviate from it, under the vain pretence of rendering him services which he has never required. Of this he will be assured, that whatsoever cannot be attained by steady adherence to known duty, it is neither safe nor right to pursue;

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and that they who quit the sphere in which they have been placed, or neglect the work which it was their bounden duty to perform; that they may employ themselves in unbidden labours, will aggravate every sin of omission with which they may be chargeable, by their presumptuous intrusion into an office, which they were neither enabled nor appointed to undertake.

Such conduct is alike inconsistent with the faith and the humility, which ought to adorn the Christian character. God, in his good providence, has appointed a set time for the accomplishment of his purposes; and that time man can neither hasten by his impatience, nor retard by his opposition. Well convinced therefore of this, [p] "He that believeth shall not make "haste;" it will be sufficient for him to know, that peace shall hereafter [q] "flourish "out of the earth;" and brethren in profession shall be united as brethren in love. This will be his consolation, when he contemplates the disorder and confusion which

[p] Isaiah xxviii. 16. [q] Psalm lxxxv. 11.

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now obscure the brightness of religion; and though his soul may be vexed within him, at the perverseness and folly of those who distract the Christian world by causeless separation and unnecessary disputations; though his spirit may vent itself in earnest prayer to God, that he would be pleased shortly to establish that harmony which he has taught him to desire; yet, relying upon the wisdom of his heavenly Master, and confident that what he has promised shall be performed in its season, [r] "though it tarry, he will wait for it," though it be withheld, he will neither murmur nor despair. And as faith would thus check the murmurs of impatience; so would humility, if properly cherished, prevent the intemperate exertions which so often counteract their own object.

For they who are deeply conscious of their own inability properly to discharge those obvious duties, which are of continual obligation, will not voluntarily enlarge the sphere of their labours, by engaging in

[r] Habakkuk ii. 3.

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the conduct of those plausible, but often dangerous experiments, which the seducer or the visionary are ever ready to propose to men of unwary benevolence.

It is indeed too much the disposition of the present age, to neglect the plain and unostentatious employments of private duty, and to exhaust its powers in vain attempts to reduce to practice the splendid theories of speculative philanthropists. The ardent and enthusiastic gaze on the paintings of their own imagination, until they mistake them for realities; and, intoxicated with an ambition to make themselves a name among the benefactors of mankind, they too often overstep the limits, to which a more lowly opinion of their own talents would confine them; they attempt to be wise above what is written, to fathom the counsels of almighty wisdom, and to determine for themselves the proper time, and the most effectual method, of promoting the cause of religion.

The meek and humble Christian will rather labour to do that will of God, which he knows to be revealed; and will believe,

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that all which cannot be obtained by persevering in the strait path of his commandments, we are neither required to seek, nor empowered to secure. . . . . .

The peacemaker is not however confined to a state of mere passive quiescence, but has many active duties to discharge. It remains with him to look well to that foundation of Christian doctrine, on which alone the peace of Christians can be securely built; and here the energies of the most resolute and indefatigable mind may find ample employment. Even if an union could be attained by a surrender of truth, the most ardent admirer of this blessing would hesitate, before he thus consented to exchange the greater for the lesser good: but if the really conscientious have ever felt it difficult to determine, when such an alternative was proposed to them; the doubts by which they have been harassed may now give way to the conviction, that all such concessions would be fruitless. The experiment has been tried at various times, by different projectors; and their anxiety to succeed has rendered

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them, as we have already seen, profuse even to prodigality in their offers. Neither the purity of our holy faith, nor the constitution of the Church, nor the due administration of the sacraments, has been considered as too precious to be bartered for a cessation of religious contests. But all have been hazarded in vain: truth has been depreciated, the authority of the Church weakened and degraded, the worship of God itself debased, and his ordinances profaned, neglected, or despised: but still Christians have continued strangers to peace; and the spirit of discord and animosity has retained its dominion. What wise or good man then will longer persevere in so hopeless, so injurious an undertaking? The dictates of a sound discretion and a well regulated sense of duty, will teach such a person rather to devote his time and his faculties to the preservation of that sound doctrine, which is committed to his trust; than to waste his strength in vain [s] attempts to promote an imaginary

[s] See Note CLIV. Appendix.

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concord, which both reason and experience prove to be unattainable.

It has been already remarked, and the attentive reader of the Scriptures will not fail to observe, that, in many instances, the peace which they promise is made to depend upon the prevalence of religious knowledge. "All thy children," says the Prophet [t] Isaiah, "shall be taught of the "Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy "children." "God," says [u] Jeremiah, "shall reveal unto his people abundance "of peace and truth." St. Paul gives us no reason to expect, that Christians will live in harmony, until the love of truth has subdued their prejudices and their obstinacy, and they have learned [x] "with one "mind and one mouth to glorify God." Then he encourages them to hope, that he, whom they thus unite in adoring, will "fill them with joy and peace in believ-"ing."

The lover of that tranquillity which real unity will produce, may thus learn how it

[t] Isaiah liv. 13. [u] Jer. xxxiii. 6.
[x] Rom. xv. 6, 13.

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is to be sought. If indeed he can be satisfied with momentary quiet and seeming reconciliation, such objects are attainable by other means; indifference may provide the one, and hypocritical compromises the other: but they who expect any real blessings to result from such sources; they who trust to [y] "good words and fair "speeches," when war is in the hearts of those who utter them; have raised the fabric of their expectations on the sand, which the first storm that visits it will sweep away. He therefore, who aspires to the character of a wise builder, will lay his foundation in that faith once delivered to the saints; not doubting that if this be well secured, God will cause peace to rest upon it; and under his protecting providence, those Christians who maintain it shall be "[z] builded *together* for an habita-"tion of God through the Spirit."

It is our peculiar blessing to have been educated in a Church, where the doctrine which flowed from the mouth of our Sa-

[y] Romans xvi. 18. [z] Ephesians ii. 22.

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viour, and was explained and recorded by his Apostles, still continues to be preached. Her confessions, her liturgy, her hierarchy, all have been tried in the fire, and all have stood the test with undiminished brightness. In this Church then, if any where in the world, the purity of apostolic truth and order yet remains. This is not, I trust, the language of vain confidence, but of sober conviction: it speaks an opinion, not founded merely upon the eulogies of her friends; but on the acknowledgments of many who are independent of her authority, and wholly unconnected with her by local situation. It affirms no more than her most inveterate enemies, even in the rage and fury of their controversial warfare, have been unable to disprove. Some of these, while they disturbed her peace, never ventured to impute to her fundamental errors in doctrine, nor sinful terms of communion; while they hazarded her very existence, for the sake of a speculative purity, some even bore [a] testimony against

[a] See Sermon VI. Notes, Appendix.

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the sin of dividing from her; and allowed that the points in which they urged improvement, were such as neither affected her title to be reckoned a true and sound Church of Christ, nor, if they were retained, would justify separation. Nurtured then in such a Church, called, as many of us already are, and as many more will be, by profession, to teach and defend her doctrines; and bound as we all are, even by the laws of self-preservation, to uphold that society, of which we form a part; shall we hesitate to determine how we are to seek for peace; or can we find a surer road to it, than by maintaining that truth, of which the Church of England is the bulwark? We may indeed earnestly endeavour to remove the prejudices and conciliate the affections of those, who now are leagued against her; but if to accomplish this be beyond our power, what remains, but to preserve concord within her walls? to look well to her defences, that no adversary overpass them in the guise of friendship, and sow dissension even in her palaces and in her streets? From external

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attacks she has, comparatively, little to apprehend; but if the [b] time should come, when her own internal harmony is disturbed; when differences arise among her defenders; and the faith, which she is called upon to preserve, is evil spoken of, and corrupted by her own children; then will the pillars of truth be undermined, and the sanctuary of peace will be brought to desolation. Happy indeed would it be for the whole Christian world, if all who profess the common faith could love as brethren: and what, it may be asked, can be devised, more likely to promote an object so universally desired, than the example of one Church at least, [c] "built as a city which "is at unity in itself?" or how can we contribute to raise such an edifice more securely, than by adhering, with the steadiness and sincerity of conviction, to the faith, the worship, and the discipline, which we have solemnly bound ourselves to support?

Strong then and urgent does the appeal become to those who love unity, that they

[b] See Note CLV. Appendix. [c] Psalm cxxii. 3.

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uphold it in that family of God, to which they particularly belong, and for whose interests it is their greatest duty to provide. If they first seek the things which make for the peace of their own Church, and contribute to the edification of her members; then will they not only have fulfilled their own appointed office, but, by so doing, will have provided, in the only effectual method in their power, for the union of the Christian world. How much more wisely, how much more profitably will they be thus employed, than in attempting to ascertain what sacrifice of truth will be sufficient to conciliate the enemies of peace; and how far the common faith must be deprived of its characteristic doctrines, in order to lower it to that standard, to which all opinions may safely be referred! Long enough has the world been deluded by such efforts; long enough has the holy cause of our religion suffered from the wantonness of such projectors! Happy will it be for the Church of England, and for mankind in general, if her members are at length persuaded to set a different

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example; if, steadily maintaining that doctrine, against which scepticism itself has never yet been able to allege a plausible objection; if, scrupulously conforming to that mode of worship, which has established its excellence, even on the futile cavils of its most strenuous opponents; if, reverencing and obeying that apostolic form of Church discipline, which has been the nurse of confessors and martyrs, and the uncorrupted guardian of the word and sacraments; they [d] "stand fast in the Lord," and are [e] "at peace among themselves."

Then might we hope, that, wearied with their own unprofitable contests, they who have separated from the Church would at length be persuaded to return to the place of their rest, and seek in her sanctuary that godly quietness, that [f] "consolation "in Christ," that "comfort of love," that "fellowship of the Spirit," which can never be found, where a perpetual struggle for the preeminence agitates the councils of self-appointed teachers, and an insa-

[d] Phil. iv. 1. [e] 1 Thess. v. 13. [f] Phil. ii. 1.

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tiable desire of speculative improvement urges the giddy and inconstant multitude to perpetual innovation.

Every faithful member of the Church of England will earnestly pray, that such may be the blessed effect of her perseverance. It is thus that he will wish to see her triumph; to this supremacy he will desire that she may be exalted. The ways of violence and compulsion he will abhor; and however he may lament the errors of those, who have wandered from her fold, by argument and persuasion alone will he desire to reclaim them: he will use no influence, but that of truth; he will seek for no proselytes, but those who return upon conviction. The language of prophecy will encourage him to look forward to a day, when [g] "all shall know the Lord "from the least to the greatest;" and well assured that this knowledge will *unite* those whom it *enlightens*, he will conceive, that the welfare of the Church will be best secured, and her influence best extended, by maintaining the purity of her consti-

g Jeremiah xxxi. 34.

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tution and her doctrine; humbly trusting, that, if she thus [h] "holds fast what she "already has, until the Lord come," she may be made the instrument in his hand, of [i] "lifting up the ensign" of his holy faith unto the ends of the earth; and that to her may be "the gathering of the na- "tions."

[h] Apocalypse ii. 25. [i] Isaiah xi. 12.

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APPENDIX.

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SERMON I.

NOTE I.

THE free agency of man is thus finely illustrated by the author of the Book of Ecclesiasticus: "He himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hands of his counsel; if thou wilt, to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thine hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man is life and death, and whether him liketh shall be given him. For the wisdom of the Lord is great, and he is mighty in power, and beholdeth all things: and his eyes are upon them that fear him, and he knoweth every work of man. He hath commanded no man to do wickedly, neither hath he given any man licence to sin." *Ecclus.* xv. 14—20.) It may perhaps be objected, that the son of Sirach, by thus representing man as *able* to keep the commandments, and to perform acceptable faithfulness, *if he will*, affords a shelter to the errors of those, who teach that there is a power in man's nature, independent of the grace of God, both to will and to perform that which is good. But to such an objection the answer will be this; that neither the context, the circumstances under which he wrote, nor the general drift of his reasoning, suggest this as his intended meaning. His discourse is wholly popular; his object is not to enter into the discussion of abstruse and difficult questions, but to inculcate general doctrines, in a clear and striking manner. It is in this way, and with this view, that he speaks of their situation to whom God makes known his laws; before whom he hath set fire and water, life and death, that they may choose that which seems to them best to follow. He

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does not think it necessary to determine, what portion of the power of choice is inherent in man's nature, and what part of it is the gift of grace: he contents himself with declaring, that man has this power, and that to exert it properly, is his indispensable duty. Our own judicious Hooker speaks with the same decision on this subject; doubtless with no intent to favour the heresy of Pelagius, but with a view to establish the general doctrine of free agency, as the only ground on which man's responsibility could be built. "Man, in perfection of nature, being made according to the likeness of his Maker, resembleth him also in the manner of working; so that whatsoever we work as men, the same we do wittingly work and freely; neither are we according to the manner of natural agents anyways tied, but that it is in our own power to leave the things we do undone." *Eccles. Pol.* lib. i. sect. 7. "Homini," says the learned and logical Stapfer, "competit libertas: ergo Deus, qui ipsi libertatem dedit, etiam libertati illi convenienter cum illo agit. Cum Deus libertati illi convenienter cum homine agat, sequitur hominem in actionibus suis liberum esse; cum vero libertas consistat in spontanea determinatione ad alterutrum oppositorum, hinc Deus ita cum homine agit, ut homo se in actionibus suis spontaneè ad alterutrum oppositorum determinare possit." *Instit. Theol. Polem.* vol. i. c. 9. s. 12. Again: "Homini competit libertas, quæ fluit ex ipsa animæ essentia: imo illa ipsi adeo essentialis est, ut nisi homo liberam haberet voluntatem, humanam naturam exuisset; quæ libertas etiam requiritur ad fundamentum omnis religionis: religio enim, cum tota doctrina morali, sine libertate tota concideret; tam ratione cultus, quam præmiorum et pœnarum." *Ibid.* vol. i. c. 3. s. 19. When however we speak of man's free will; his fallen state, and impaired faculties in consequence of the fall, must not be forgotten. In this, as in every other respect he has to deplore the fatal consequences of that event; which, while it destroyed the innocence, and degraded the dignity, weakened also all the nobler powers of his nature. "The condition of man," as our Article has very clearly expressed the doctrine, "after the fall

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of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God." *Art.* 10. In what relates then to things spiritual, the will of man, in his present natural state, cannot be said to be, in all particulars, free and independent. It is indeed absolutely free to reject the offer of salvation; for we have authority from Scripture to assert, that even when God calls and invites, man may refuse to come. But we say not that he is of himself able to will its acceptance: this power and liberty, which was his original birthright, he can now only receive from the preventing graces of that Spirit, bestowed by Jesus Christ. "*If the son maketh us free, we shall be free indeed*; but without grace, freewill to good is not once to be imagined in fallen man." *Plaifere's Appeal to the Gospel. Tracts*, p. 92.] The same Author has thus excellently stated the true sense, in which freedom of will may be predicated of fallen man. "Freedom of will I contend for; but it is on the left side, as I may call it, it is to will evil; that is, under the grace of God, or notwithstanding the grace of God, whereby I may will good, I may decline to evil, and leave the good. This was in Adam before his fall, a single, innocent possibility to decline to evil: nor should it seem strange that a creature should be mutable, or that it should be proper to God to be unchangeably good, or that the very supernatural grace that Adam had for his corroboration to good, did not render his will immoveable to evil. This natural freedom to evil is called *resistentia connata*, which Dr. Ward confesseth is not taken away by grace, nor perhaps is it desirable that it should be, since it is the root of the praise of human righteousness; for he is to be commended that could transgress, and would not; not he that was good, and could be no other. Nor ought the example of the unalterably holy and righteous God to be objected against this, since he is above and out of all predicaments wherein we are. This natural *freedom to evil* remaineth in man fallen, and there is now come to it, over and above, *resistentia adnata*, a precipitate proneness unto evil, out of our thraldom to the dominion and

tyranny of Satan." *Ibid.* p. 94. To the same purpose are the following observations of South. "Doubtless the will of man in the state of innocence had an entire freedom, or perfect equipendency and indifference to either part of the contradiction, *to stand*, or *not to stand; to accept*, or *not to accept*, the temptation. I will grant the will of man to be now as much a slave as any one will have it, and to be only *free to sin;* that is, instead of a liberty to have only a licentiousness; yet certainly this is not nature, but chance. We were not born crooked; we learned these turnings and windings of the serpent; and therefore it cannot be but a blasphemous piece of ingratitude to ascribe them to God; and to make the plague of our nature the condition of our creation." *South*, vol. ii. Serm. 2. p. 57.

NOTE II.

In another portion of these Lectures, I shall have occasion to substantiate this position more at large; at present, it may be sufficient to produce the following strong appeal against divisions, from the writings of one, who stood among the most conspicuous of those assailants, under whose attack the Church of England was for a time permitted to fall.

"In the next place let us consider the greatnesse of this sin," (schism,) "and the rather, because in truth the name and charge is growne so common amongst us, (as formerly the name of Puritan was,) that many make no account of it, whether they be charged justly or unjustly with it; but whoever considers of it according to the sense of the Scripture will finde, that the sinne of schisme is a most hainous sinne; the greatnesse of it is not easily set forth in words, whether you consider it in the nature of it, or in the effects of it. In

1. The nature of it; it's contrary to one of the highest ends of Christ's great undertaking, which is, that all his people should bee one, he dyed to that end, to make them one with himselfe, and one with one another, he begged it of his Father, that they should bee one; now this sinne tends to frustrate this great designe of Jesus Christ.

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"And secondly, It is contrary to all the commandements of Christ, for all the commands which he hath given to his people for the ordering of their conversation, himselfe tells us, *that the end of the commandment is love.* 2. If we consider the effects of it, they are most dreadful and mischievous: for first, it is wonderfully dishonourable to Jesus Christ; for whereas he holds out to all the world, that his people are *one house, one body, one city*, which is at unity, compacted together, &c. This is a public confutation of it, makes Jerusalem appeare as a Babel, a city of confusion, a kingdom divided, wherein is nothing but *disorders*, and *tumults*, and the like. And as it is dishonourable to Christ, so it wonderfully hinders and destroys the *edification* of the Church, bothe the edification of them who make the schisme, and the edification of them from whom the rent is made, depriving them of that spirituall good they might, and should receive and supply from, and to one another; for though Jesus Christ the head be the onely fountaine of our spiritual life, yet it is as true that Christ's usuall way of exercising, strengthening, increasing, and perfecting it, is in the fellowship of the body, that by *what every joint supplies, the whole may be increased;* so that if we weigh it seriously, we must conclude that as nothing within the bounds of the Church more argues a conformity to the spirit of the Gospel then the study of unity, peace, and concord, so few things more argue an opposition to Christ's worke, and his people's good, then this spirit of division." *Stephen Marshall's Sermon before the Lord Mayor at the Spittle, Easter Monday, April* 1652. p. 22.

NOTE III.

"Illud ἐν ἡμῖν scribet Bodius in sacerdotali J. C. orat. p. 49. rationem vel qualitatem istius unitatis fidelium hic magis determinat, quod inter se uniti fideles, simul arctissimam cum Patre et Filio unionem communionemque habentes, in his quasi esse et manere debeant." *Koecheri Analecta in Wolfii curas ad Joh.* xvii. 21.

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NOTE IV.

"As he that should in any principal doctrine differ from Plato (denying the immortality of the soul, the providence of God, the natural difference of good and evil) would not be a *Platonist*: so he that dissenteth from any doctrine of importance, manifestly taught by Christ, doth renounce Christianity." *Barrow on the Unity of the Church.*

NOTE V.

On this subject it has been well observed by Bp. Hall, in his "Peace Maker," that, "there is just place for Canus his distinction, betwixt *truths of Christian doctrine, and truths of Catholic faith*; there being in the former great latitude and variety, in the latter more narrowness and restraint. As there is no truth, therefore, which may be a meet subject of our contempt or opposition; so there are some truths, which may be too much striven for, *others never enough*. Of which last kind are those, which do *mainly concern the grounds* of our Christian religion." *Bp. Hall's Works*, folio, vol. iii. p. 553. And a more acute and argumentative writer than Bp. Hall has made an observation, which tends to the same point. "There are," says he, "points of less moment more obscurely delivered, in which Christians with breach of unity may dissent, about which they may dispute, in which they may err *without breach of unity, or prejudice to charity.*" *Barrow on the Unity of the Church.*

NOTE VI.

This subject is thus beautifully illustrated by Cyprian. "Ecclesia quoque una est, quæ in multitudinem latius incremento fœcunditatis extenditur: quomodo solis multi radii, sed lumen unum: et rami arboris multi, sed robur unum tenaci radice fundatum: et cum de fonte uno rivi plurimi defluunt, numerositas licet diffusa videatur exundantis copiæ largitate, unitas tamen servatur in origine. Avelle radium solis a corpore, divisionem lucis unitas non capit: ab arbore frange ramum, fractus germinare non po-

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terit: a fonte præcide rivum, præcisus arescet. Sic Ecclesia domini luce perfusa per orbem totum radios suos porrigit, unum tamen lumen est, quod ubique diffunditur, nec unitas corporis separatur: ramos suos in universam terram copia ubertatis extendit, profluentes largiter rivos latius expandit: unum tamen caput est, et origo una, et una mater, fœcunditatis successibus copiosa." *Cyprian. de Unitate Ecclesiæ.* Edit. Oxon. p. 108.

NOTE VII.

"Edant ergo origines ecclesiarum suarum, evolvant ordinem episcoporum suorum, ita per successiones ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex Apostolis, vel apostolicis viris, qui tamen cum Apostolis perseverarit, habuerit auctorem et antecessorem. Hoc enim modo Ecclesiæ apostolicæ census suos deferunt. Sicut Smyrnæorum Ecclesia Polycarpum ab Joanne collocatum refert: sicut Romanorum Clementem a Petro ordinatum itidem. Perinde utique et cæteræ exhibent quos ab Apostolis in episcopatum constitutos Apostolici seminis traduces habeant." *Tertullianus de Præscript. Hæret.* Edit. Rigalt. p. 213.

NOTE VIII.

"Proinde ecclesias apud unam quamque civitatem condiderunt (Apostoli) a quibus *traducem fidei et semina doctrinæ,* ceteræ exinde ecclesiæ mutuatæ sunt, et quotidie mutuantur, ut Ecclesiæ fiant. Ac per hoc et ipsæ Apostolicæ deputantur, ut soboles apostolicarum ecclesiarum. Omne genus ad originem suam censeatur necesse est. Itaque tot ac tantæ Ecclesiæ, una est illa ab Apostolis prima, ex qua omnes. Sic omnes prima, et Apostolicæ, dum una omnes probant unitatem: dum est illis communicatio pacis, et appellatio fraternitatis, et contesseratio hospitalitatis, quæ jura non alia ratio regit, quam ejusdem sacramenti una traditio." *Tertullianus de Præscript. Hæret.* Edit. Rigalt. p. 208.

NOTE IX.

"Communis est omnibus Christianis religionis *Doc-*

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trina, qua instituuntur Deum Patrem, Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum venerari ut auctorem æternæ salutis homini misero ex mera liberalitate decretæ, eidemque impetrandæ per obedientiam Filii Dei, Christi Jesu, et ad sententiam Dei Patris applicandæ per gratiam Spiritus Sancti. Idem iis est sanæ doctrinæ PRINCIPIUM, codex librorum Veteris et Novi Testamenti, sic dictus. Eadem proin FIDES, et cum Fide χαρίσματα scientiæ, sapientiæ, σωφροσύνης, reverentiæ Dei, et qualiumcunque virtutum Christianarum. Inde communia ipsis beneficia *gratiæ, justitiæ, libertatis, sanctimoniæ*, et *conservationis*. Eadem SPES magnæ salutis μετὰ δόξης αἰωνίου. Tandem, cum doctrinæ religionis ipsa respondere debeat religio: idem Christianis omnibus est CULTUS Dei in Christo, tam privatus quam publicus, ejusque symbola, quæ sacramenta appellamus. Pauli verba, (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Per *unum Spiritum* nos omnes in unum corpus *baptizati sumus*, et Judæi, et Græci, et servi, et liberi, et omnes poti sumus in eundem Spiritum; h. e. ut eadem Spiritus dona et operationes participaremus." *Vitringa, Observat. Sacr.* lib. v. c. 7. s. 9. p. 106.

NOTE X.

" Si veteris ecclesiæ Christianæ doctores hic consulamus, videntur passim hanc amplexi esse sententiam, *communionem credentium* in sacris publicis, cœna Domini, et mutuis fraterni amoris officiis, non celebrari sub *hypothesi*, sed ἁπλῶς, *absolute*. Supponebant illi et persuasum sibi habuisse videntur, omnes, qui baptismali aqua post antecedaneam preparationem rite tincti, ecclesiæ Christianæ adjunguntur, per gratiam Spiritus Sancti vere *regenerari*, atque adeo ecclesiam Christianam esse cœtum hominum, qui secundum potissimam sui partem (hypocritis nimirum, qui pauci numero in ea latere poterant, exceptis:) *gratiam* Spiritus Sancti *renovantem* et *sanctificantem* participabant. Proinde *Ecclesiæ* adscriptum esse, fere tantundem esse ac *cœlesti* adscriptum esse *civitati*. Nomen suum in diptychis Ecclesiæ habere, idem fere esse quod nomen suum inscriptum habere ipsi albo electorum Dei. *Ecclesiæ* contra *communione secludi*, sive, *sacramento*

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corporis et sanguinis Domini exauctorari, et *arceri* ab *omni communicatione fraternitatis*, Tertulliani rursus dictione; ad uxor. lib. ii. cap. 3. dubiam facere spem salutis, et æterni exitii metum incutere: quippe supponebant, extra *communionem Ecclesiæ externam*, quam cum *communione sanctorum mystica* et *spirituali* confundebant, neminem servari. Tum præterea, quæ his affinia sunt, et ex eodem fonte hausta; episcopos in Ecclesia Christiana ipsius Christi Jesu vices et personam sustinere; ab iis, rite et ordine electis qui se separabant, se simul separare a communione ipsius Christi; qui ab episcopis post pœnitentiam publice secundum disciplinæ ecclesiasticæ canones actam *absolvebantur*, et dignitati suæ restituti *osculo pacis* honorabantur; ab ipso Deo et Christo Judice *absolvi* in foro cœlesti: denique quæ omnium ejusmodi hypothesium audacissima erat, actum esse de salute omnium illorum, qui se *schismate* secernebant ab *externa* Ecclesiæ et sacrorum *communione:* etiamsi hactenus nec hæresi infecti, nec criminibus, professionem Christianismi destruentibus, obstricti essent. Quæ singula facile mihi foret ex sententiis et disciplina doctorum Ecclesiæ primævæ prolixe adstruere, si peritioribus ignota essent, aut ratio instituti nostri id permitteret." *Vitringa, Observat. Sacr.* lib. v. cap. 8. s. 4. p. 118.

Vitringa's testimony on this important subject is the more valuable, inasmuch as it makes against his own argument. He indeed, though his respect for truth induces him to confess, that such were the opinions held by the primitive Church, does not scruple to dissent from them. His own ideas of Church communion were very loose and indeterminate, and such as seem scarcely compatible with the existence of such a sin as schism. He allows any man to join himself to any sect of Christians, whose profession and discipline he may approve; provided that, notwithstanding this external connection, he will consider his real communion with the society he has thus joined, to be merely hypothetical, depending entirely upon this condition; that his preference of this sect is justifiable, and that it is really a part of the Church of Christ. "Nimi-

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rum adjungo me huic vel illi cœtui Christiano, cujus professio et disciplina mihi placent, sub hac σχέσει vel hypothesi, *quatenus* Ecclesia illa particularis partem facit *Ecclesiæ internæ*, hoc est *mystici corporis Christi*. Ecclesia *interna*, sive *mysticum* Christi corpus, sola est vera Ecclesia, ut Augustinus optime multis locis docuit. *Externa* vero *Ecclesia* non dicitur Ecclesia, nisi cum respectu ad *internam*: nec est *Ecclesia* nisi sub hac σχέσει et hypothesi." *Vitringa, Observat. Sacr.* lib. v. cap. 9. s. 11. p. 136. Thus, by a little sophistry, and some convenient mental reservation, the whole character of the Church, as an external society founded by Christ, and directed by laws of his enactment, and governors of his appointment, is at once destroyed; and men are taught, that they may join any and every sect by turns, without schism; and be true churchmen without being connected with the Church by any real bond of communion.

NOTE XI.

"So many regions as there are under heaven that do truly profess the Christian name, so many national churches there are; in all these nations there are many provincial, in all those provinces many diocesan, in all those dioceses many parochial churches, in all those parishes many Christian families, in all those families many Christian souls. Now all those souls, families, parishes, dioceses, provinces, nations, make up but one Catholic Church upon earth. The God of the Church cannot abide either conventicles of separation, or pluralities of professions, or appropriations of catholicism." Catholic Roman is an absurd Donatian soleciſm; this is to seek *orbem in urbe*, as that council said well. Happy were it for that church, if it were a sound limb (though but the little toe) of that mighty and precious body, wherein no believing Jew nor Indian may not challenge to be jointed. Neither difference of time, nor distance of place, nor rigour of unjust cenſure, nor any unessential error can bar an interest in this blessed unity. As this flourishing Church of Great Britain (after all the spightful calumniations of malicious men) is one of the most conspi-

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evous members of the Catholic upon earth; so we in her communion do make up one body with the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors and faithful Christians of all ages and times; we succeed in their faith, we glory in their succession, we triumph in their glory. Whither go ye then ye weak, ignorant, seduced souls, that run to seek this dove in a foreign nest? She is here if she have any nest under heaven. Let me never have part in her, or in heaven, if any church in the world have more part in the universal." *Bp. Hall's Works*, folio, vol. iii. p. 310.

NOTE XII.

"Si inter alia, nec pauca, nec contemnenda, ad pacem mutuam incitamenta, illud præcipuum apud omnes habere locum fas sit (nullo interim ad Christum respectu habito) quod *ex uno Adamo* omnes originem nostram traducentes, *unius* etiam sanguinis (Act. xvii. 26.) participes sumus, atque unius, utcunque magnæ, *Familiæ membra;* (Eph. iii. 15.) quanto magis *unitatem*, quam in Christo habemus, *spiritualem*, summa ope nitendum est, ut assequamur nosmetipsi, atque in aliis quibuscunque pro nostra virili promoveamus? Ex duabus nimirum populis, (Judæis Gentilibusque) in unum corpus, quod est Ecclesia, per Jesum Christum coalescimus (Ephes. ii. 14. iii. 6.) qui et *pax nostra* dicitur (Ephes. ii. 14.) et *hæreditatis nostræ arrhabo.* (Eph. i. 14.) Absit ut *paries intergerinus a Christo* dirutus. (Ephes. ii. 14.) de integro instauretur a Christianis. Quotquot vera in Christum fide una cum Christo adunamur, ejusdem *corporis* etiam *mystici*, cujus *caput est*, Christus (Col. i. 18. Eph. i. 22, 23.) *membra* sumus conjunctissima. (1 Cor. xii. 27.) Hæc autem unitas non efficitur nisi ab ipso Spiritu Sancto, (1 John iv. 3.) cui fideles sunt habitaculo, et qui est vere credentium *copula*, tam *cum Christo* quam *inter se.* At quorum unus est Spiritus, eorum unus sit animus necessum est. Una etiam est nostri omnium ad pietatem probitatemque vocatio saltem generalis; et unica spe vocationis (Eph. i. 8. iv. 4.) in Christo Jesu proposita nos erigimur simul omnes. Quorsum ergo? immo vero quam absurdum est, ut modo in terris distemus,

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invicem, qui simul in cœlis beatam vitam victuri sumus sempiternam? Unicum omnes habemus *Herum*, unum *Dominum Redemptorem*; absit procul ut *conservi*, in lites et jurgia incurrendo, in communis Domini excandescentiam adversus nos pariter incurramus. Unum est nobis *evangelium*; unica *fides*, (si modo fides) per unum Spiritum in nobis accensa, omnibus nobis est communis. At quorum *mentes*; quoad præcipua ac ad salutem necessaria sunt unitæ, eorum voluntates quorsum quæso disjungerentur. Aut quorum corda plane consentiunt, eorum capita cur dissentirent? Unico omnes nos baptismate (1 Cor. xii. 13. Eph. ii. 21.) in unum corpus coagmentamur: atque inter baptizandum unius Spiritus efficacia uni Christo inserimur. *In una cœna sacramentali* de uno pane participamus. (1 Cor. x. 17.) Deus bone! quid obstat, quo minus nos invicem diligamus? Quænam ate nos impellit? aut quænam res alia eo potest nos adigere, ut in partes et schismata segregemur, qui iisdem sacramentis nobis reciproce conglutinamur? ut in pauca rem conferam. Unus Deus cultores exigit unanimes. Unicum Deum adoramus ad unum omnes. *Unus est ille omnium Pater* (ut inquit Apostolus ad Ephesios iv. 6.) ejusque Filii qui sumus, fratres pariter ut simus, necesse est. At quam bonum et quam jucundum est κατοικεῖν ἀδελφὺς ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ, *Fratres in unum habitare!* Quam contra pejus, quam diabolicum, fratres mortales et moribundos, immortales erga se invicem inimicitias exercere, immortalibus in una eaque Patris omnium domo (Ephes. ii. 19.) dissidiis confligere, et contra se mutuo belligerare? Ad unitatem τῆς ὁμονοίας καὶ τῆς ὁμοψήφιας, *animi* simul et *oris*, desideratissimam, quam ipse Christus ardentissime rogavit Patrem (Johan. xvii. 21.) (in oratione sua προαγωνίω.) Beatus Paulus nos excitat, invitat, verbisque gravissimis adhortatur. *Quod*, inquit, *superest fratres, valete, instauramini, idem sentite, in pace agite; Deusque pacis et charitatis erit vobiscum* (2 Cor. xiii.) *Precor vos ergo captivus in Domino tolerate alii alios per charitatem.* (Neque enim servari pax potest sine mutua tolerantia, nec locum habet tolerantia inter feroces furiososque.) *Studete Spiritus unitatem per vinculum pacis conservare; unum est corpus, unus Spiritus,*

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una spes vocationis, unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptisma, unus Deus et Pater omnium, qui est super omnes, et per omnes, et in omnibus vobis, (Ephes. iv.) Quicunque ergo charitatem fraternam violant, neque εὐσπλάγχνοι, neque φιλόφρονες, certe fieri non potest quin omnia ista, quanta quanta, discerpant simul dissipentque. Summa hactenus dictorum ad hoc unum redit, ut simultatibus quibuscunque de re religiosa valere jussis, concordes, unanimes, et comes simus; ut fraterna præditi charitate, mutuo molestiarum sensu affecti, ad intimam proni misericordiam, idem deinceps loquamur omnes, (1 Pet. iii. 8. 1 Cor. i. 10.) idem deinceps sentiamus, sapiamus idem: nec in hac vita peritura pauxillum temporis dissideamus, eadem prorsus felicitate æternum in altera fruituri." *Th. Pierce, Pacificatorium Orthodoxæ Theologiæ Corpusculum Procem.* Vitringa also, though his ideas of church communion were so vague, yet was induced by the same train of reflection to insist upon the duty of preserving it. "Datur igitur communio aliqua inter credentes, imo sane datur. Qui enim fieri possit, ut qui communes inter se habent res plures et præstantissimas, qui in eundem credunt Servatorem, eandem sperant salutem, eadem participant dona gratiæ, ab eodem animantur et perficiuntur Spiritu, et in eandem omnes adsciti sunt familiam; quibus est εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἓν βάπτισμα, ut cum Apostolo loquar; (Ephes. iv. 5.) sive qui sunt unius spei, voti, et disciplinæ, quæ Tertulliani phrasis est: (*ad Uxor.* l. ii. c. 9.) inter eos non vigeat communio." *Vitringa, Observat. Sacr.* lib. v. c. 7. s. 4. p. 104.

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SERMON II.

NOTE XIII.

THE words "He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," have been understood to mean, "not the persons themselves, but the gifts of those persons, the office of apostles, evangelists, pastors, &c." *Stillingfleet's Irenicum*, part ii. chap. 2. This interpretation is mentioned by Wolfius with approbation; "Recte hæc admonita mihi videntur. Diversa hic doctorum Ecclesiæ officia indicantur, ut appareat eminentissima Christi majestas et bonitas, qua factum sit, ut non deessent *dona*, quibus ad officia illa in commune Ecclesiæ commodum præstanda et perficienda opus sit." *Wolfius ad locum.* St. Paul therefore may be considered, as not merely asserting the personal commission of himself and his fellow labourers in the different ranks of the ministry then established; but that Christ appointed the government of his Church to be perpetually administered by a succession of officers, deriving their authority originally from his commission.

Wolfius however rejects entirely that construction of the following words, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων, εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τ. σ. τ. X. which by leaving out the comma after ἁγίων would render the passage thus; *for the fitting out or completing of the saints for the work of the ministry*, &c. a mode of interpretation which has been sometimes adopted, to give a colour of Scripture authority to the wild pretensions of those, who, assuming that they were saints and gifted persons, have hence inferred their commission to undertake the work of the ministry. "Ita hæc per σίγμας interpun-" gunt Erasmus Schmidius, Stephanus Curcellæus, et

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alii, atque adeo tria momenta seu capita constituunt, ad quæ obtinenda Dominus noster doctores Ecclesiæ largitus sit, eosque idoneis donis instruxerit. Momenta illa, seu commoda sunt *instauratio, seu coagmentatio sanctorum, præparatio ad opus ministerii*, ac denique ædificatio totius Ecclesiæ; tanquam corporis Christi mystici. Alii priora verba πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας arctissime conjungunt, et vertunt cum vulgato: *ad consummationem sanctorum in opus ministerii.* Horum judicio Paulus diceret, ut sancti instituantur ad opus ministerii recte aliquando præstandum. Hæc autem mens Pauli esse vix potest, cum non omnes sancti aut fideles doctores Ecclesiæ tunc temporis præstiterint, aut præstare potuerint. Itaque necesse est, ut aliam interpretationem quæramus, quæ ostendat, quomodo quæ a Paulo dicuntur, sibi probe constent.—Video obverti his posse, quod Apostolus non scripserit πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, πρὸς ἔργον διακονίας, πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος, sed πρὸς καταρτισμὸν, εἰς ἔργον, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν, adeoque satis subindicarit, duo posteriora membra ad primum, tanquam καταρτισμοῦ fines et fructus, pertinere. Id vero ex usu harum particularum non consequitur. Paulus enim etiam alias particulas πρὸς et εἰς adhibet, ubi de duobus diversis momentis loquitur. Sic Rom. xv. 2. Ἕκαστος γὰρ ἡμῶν τῷ πλησίον ἀρεσκέτω εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν, πρὸς οἰκοδομήν. Constat etiam, me non monente, utramque particulam ad indicandum rei seu actionis scopum adhiberi. Quando Paulus Scripturæ lectionem commendat Timotheo 2 Epist. iii. 15. addit eam ipsam posse σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν, commate autem sequente 16. eandem ait esse ὠφέλιμον πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἔλεγχον &c. Quod si denique Paulus tria illa tanquam a se invicem distincta inculcare voluisset, non scripturus, credo, erat πρὸς καταρτισμὸν εἰς ἔργον, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν, sed potius πρὸς καταρτισμὸν εἰς ἔργον καὶ οἰκοδομήν." *Wolfius ad locum.*

NOTE XIV.

The intimate nature of that union, which is intended to be represented to our minds by this expression, is thus stated by the learned Dr. Thomas Jackson. "The questions concerning the union are in general, whe-

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ther this union come nearer to the nature of union betwixt bodies civil, natural, or artificial. And to this we answer, that each of these unions in part resembles it; all of them do not fully express it: because it is more real, more firm, and solid, than any union can be betwixt the parts of bodies, civil, artificial, or natural. For this Church is a true and real body, consisting of many parts, all really (though mystically and spiritually) united unto one head; and by their real union with one head, are all truly and really united amongst themselves. The union is wrought between both, by a power supernatural, by a skill superartificial, by a wisdom infinitely surmounting the highest reach of human policy. That this Church is a true body, the Apostle (who in his lifetime was a live member of it, and (under Christ the head) a chief master builder for his skill, and yet withal a most painful labourer in fashioning or squaring the parts or materials for this structure) hath left registered. *I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the affliction of Christ in my flesh, for his body's sake, which is the Church.* (Colos. i. 24.) Every one then is so far a member of Christ's Church, as he is a member of Christ's body. He that is not in some sort a member of Christ's body, can be in no sort a member of his Church. He that is a true live member of the one, is a true live member of the other; he that is but an equivocal, analogical, hypocritical, or painted member of the one, is but an equivocal, hypocritical, painted, or analogical member of the other." *Thos. Jackson's Works*, tom. iii. b. 12. c. 3.

NOTE XV.

"To the constitution of an entire visible church there is required (besides unity of profession, or the unity of faith professed, or of moral laws acknowledged) an unity of laws or ordinances judicial, or an unity of discipline, of stipulation, or obligement unto a peculiar kind of power or authority, before and above all other societies or corporations." *T. Jackson's Works*, tom. iii. b. 12. c. 3.

NOTE XVI.

"Vinculum et fundamentum omnis societatis sunt leges, per quas plures *libero consensu* in unum corpus conjunguntur et coalescunt: leges autem vinculum istius societatis, quemcunque eiquæ societatis membro *officia* imponant, in totius communitatis salutem observanda." *Vitringa, Observat. Sacr.* lib. v. cap. 7. p. 107.

"Unity of laws and ordinances is the life, the soul, and spirit of every corporation or body civil. Oaths or other obligements to the observation of the same laws, or to the maintenance of privileges bestowed upon the society, are as the nerves and arteries, by which motion is conveyed from the head or principal members to every inferior or particular member of the same society." *Thos. Jackson*, tom. iii. b. 12. c. 2.

NOTE XVII.

The advantages resulting from this union of the primitive Christians, and the facility with which it was promoted and preserved, by the universal establishment of the same form of church government, may be well exemplified by the practice, then common, of providing travellers with canonical epistles, as they were termed, which secured them a ready and hospitable reception from the faithful wherever they journeyed. "There was a time," says Bishop Horne, "and it is pleasing to look back to it, when a Christian, furnished with proper credentials from his Bishop, might travel through the world, from east to west, and from north to south, and be received to communion with his brethren in any part of the globe then known." *Horne's Works*, vol. v. p. 221. Of these epistles, the following account is given by Cave. "There were," says he, "especially three sorts. First, *Συστατικαὶ*, or commendatory epistles, mentioned by St. Paul, and were in use among the heathens. They were granted to clergymen going into another diocese, by the Bishop that ordained them, testifying their ordination, their soundness and orthodoxy in the faith, the innocency and unblamableness of their lives. To those that had been under, or had been suspected of *excommunication*, declaring their absolution,

and recommending them to be received in the number of the faithful. Lastly, they were granted to all, whether clergy or laity, that were to *travel*, as tickets of hospitality, that wherever they came, upon producing these letters, they might be known to be catholic and orthodox, and as such received and entertained by them. A piece of prudence which Julian the Apostate admired in the Christian constitution, the like whereto he endeavoured to establish in his Pagan reformation. The second sort were Ἀπολυτικαὶ, letters dimissory, whereby leave was given to persons going into another diocese, either to be ordained by the Bishop of that place, or if ordained already, to be admitted and incorporated into the clergy of that church. Upon which account the ancient councils everywhere provide, that no stranger shall receive ordination at the hands of another Bishop, or exercise any ministerial act in another diocese, without the consent and dimissory letters of the Bishop of that place from whence he comes. The third were Εἰρηνικαὶ, letters of peace, granted by the Bishop to the poor that were oppressed, and such as fled to the Church for its protection and assistance; but especially to such of the clergy as were to go out of one diocese into another; it being directed to the Bishop of that diocese, that he would receive him, that so he might take no offence, but that peaceable concord and agreement might be maintained between them." *Cave's Primitive Christianity*, part 3. ch. iii. p. 417. Edit. 6. 1702.

NOTE XVIII.

"Adeo quotidie adolescentem numerum Christianorum ingemitis. Obsessam vociferamini civitatem, in agris, in castellis, in insulis Christianos; omnem sexum, omnem ætatem, omnem denique dignitatem transgredi a vobis, quasi detrimenti doletis." *Tertullianus ad Nationes*, lib. i. p. 40. Edit. Rigalt.

NOTE XIX.

"Hesterni sumus, et vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decimas, palatium, senatum, forum. Sola vobis relinquimus templa. Potuimus et inermes nec rebelles,

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sed tantummodo discordes solius divortii invidia adversus vos dimicasse.

Si enim tanta vis hominum in aliquem orbis remoti sinum abrupissemus a vobis, suffudisset utique dominationem vestram tot qualiumcunque amissio civium; immo etiam et ipsa destitutione punisset. Proculdubio expavissetis ad solitudinem vestram, ad silentium rerum, et stuporem quemdam quasi mortui orbis. Quæsissetis quibus imperaretis; plures hostes quam cives vobis remansissent." *Tertulliani Apologeticus*, p. 30. Edit. Rigalt.

NOTE XX.

"Were we willing or constant in that which is good, discipline were not so requisite; but because the corruption of our nature is such, that we are soon deceived of ourselves, sooner seduced by others, and soonest of all averted and perverted with feare and desire: to settle the unsteadfastnesse of our hearts, and bridle the unrulines of our affections; the Lord hath provided for all societies the line of direction, and rod of correction, as well to guide the tractable, as to represse the obstinate: lest disorder endured should breede confusion, the forerunner of all ruine. Since then the Church of Christ is the house of God, the citie of the living God, and the kingdome of his beloved Son: shall wee thinke that God is carefull for others, and carelesse for his own? or that confusion ought to be lesse doubted and feared in heavenly, then in earthly things? God is no where author of confusion, but of peace, especially in his Church: in which he commandeth all things to be decently and orderly done. Where no man doth governe, what order can be kept? Where no man doth moderate, what peace can be had? Yea what greater discipation can befall the Church of God, then for every man to intrude where he list, and obtrude what he will, without restraint or reproofe? Wherefore God hath appointed stewards over his houshold, watchmen and leaders over his flocke, labourers in his harvest, husbandmen in his tillage, divers administrations, as well for the preservation as edification of the Church, which is the body of Christ, and so farre foorth answer-

eth the frame of man's body, that as there, so in the Church, God hath set some to be instead of eies, eares, tongue and handes: that is, to bee principall members for the guiding and directing of the whole, which without them is maimed and unable to provide for the safety and securitie of itselfe." *Bilson on the perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, chap. i. p. 1, 2.

The testimony of Barrow to the same point is most decisive. "Reason," says he, "plainly doth require such subordinations; for that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any durable concord or charity in Christian societies, to establish any decent harmony in the worship and service of God, to check odious scandals, to prevent or repress baneful factions, to guard our religion from being overspread with pernicious heresies, to keep the Church from being shattered into numberless sects, and thence from being crumbled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold the profession and practice of Christianity itself. For how, if there be not settled corporations of Christian people, having bulk and strength sufficient by joint endeavour to maintain the truth, honour, and interest of their religion; if the Church should only consist of independent and incoherent particles (like dust or sand) easily scattered by any wind of opposition from without, or by any commotion within; if Christendom should be merely a Babel of confused opinions and practices, how, I say, then could Christianity subsist? How could the simple among so discordant apprehensions be able to discern the truth of it, how would the wise be tempted to dislike it, being so mangled and disfigured. What an object of contempt and scorn would it be to the profaner world, in such a case." *Barrow's Works*, vol. iii. p. 202. Serm. XXIV.

NOTE XXI.

It is perhaps scarcely necessary to observe, that the commission here spoken of does not include those supernatural powers which the Apostles possessed. What they taught, "as moved by the Holy Ghost," (1 Pet. i. 21.) what they did, "the Lord" miraculously "working with them," (Mark xvi. 20.) was peculiar to themselves.

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As commissioned to declare "the whole counsel of God," (Acts xx. 27.) they stood alone: and their successors could neither add to nor diminish the doctrines which they commissioned them to deliver. As "endued with power from on high," (Luke xxiv. 49.) they exercised a right of inflicting punishments upon the unfaithful disciple, (Acts v.) and bestowing peculiar gifts on those who were deemed fit to use them, (Acts xix. 6.) which their successors presumed not to claim. The power itself was temporary; granted to meet the peculiar exigencies of the infant church, and withdrawn (as were also by degrees all other extraordinary gifts) when these exigencies ceased. But independent of this personal and peculiar authority, the commission of our Saviour conveyed to the Apostles a power of governing the church, and of ordaining persons to fill the subordinate stations in the ministry; and this power, as it was of perpetual necessity, was also to be perpetuated in the church; it was to be "committed" by them "to faithful men," (2 Tim. ii. 2.) who were not only to exercise it themselves, but to transmit it through their successors, whom they were to ordain to this peculiar office, to the end of time.

"It will happily be granted," says Bilson on this important subject, "the Apostles had their prerogative and preeminence above others in the Church of Christ; but that limitted to their persons, and during for their lives: and therefore no reason can be made from their superioritie to force the like to be received and established in the Church of Christ for all ages and places; since their office and function are long since ceased, and no like power reserved to their successours after them. I doe not denie but many things in the Apostles were personall, given them by God's wisdome for the first spreading of the faith, and planting of the churches amongst Jewes and Gentiles, that all nations might be converted unto Christ by the sight of their miracles, and directed by the truth of their doctrine: yet that all their gifts ended with their lives, and no part of their charge and power remained to their after-commers; may neither be confessed by us, nor affirmed by any,

unlesse we mean wholly to subvert the Church of Christ. To be called by Christ's own mouth, and sent into all nations; to be furnished with the infallible assurance of his truth, and visible assistance of his Spirit; not only to speak with tongues, cure diseases, worke miracles, know secrets, and understand all wisdome, but to give the Holy Ghost to others, that they might doe the like; these things, I say, were needfull at the first preaching of the Gospell to convert infidels that never heard of Christ before; to confirme the believers compassed with divers temptations; and to store the whole world, then presently, with meete pastors and teachers: but to maintaine the church once setled, and faith once preached, there is no cause why either the immediate vocation, or generall commission, or mightie operation, and sudden inspiration of the Apostles should alewaies endure. The Scriptures once written, suffice all ages for instruction: the miracles then done are for ever a most evident confirmation of their doctrine; the authoritie of their first calling, liveth yet in their succession; and time and travel, joyned with God's graces, bring pastours at this present to perfection; yet the Apostles charge to teach, baptize, and administer the Lord's Supper, to bind and loose sinnes in heaven and in earth, to impose hands for the ordaining of pastours and elders; these parts of the apostolicke function and charge are not decaied, and cannot be wanted in the Church of God. There must either be no church, or els these must remaine: for without these no church can continue." *Bilson on the perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, ch. ix. p. 105.

NOTE XXII.

It was the opinion of Bp. Pearce (see *Comment. in Matt.* xxviii. 20.) that the words *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος* signify the end of the Jewish age: whence it would follow, that the promise of our Saviour was to be limited to those miraculous assistances, which were vouchsafed to the Apostles. But the authorities in favour of the interpretation adopted in this Lecture, must be allowed to determine the question against him; if the unani-

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mous sentiments of so many learned men, on a subject strictly within their province, may be considered as decisive.

"Quid sit συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος satis apparet supra, c. xiii. v. 39, 46, 49. c. xxiv. v. 3. Post id tempus, cum Christus regnum traditurus est Patri, aderit nobis, sed non eo modo de quo hic agitur, ad imbecillitatis nostræ subsidium. Quare potest τὸ ἕως hic proprie accipi. Hinc autem manifestissime apparet, *voluisse Christum ut Apostoli aliis, alii rursum aliis ὑπὸ ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἱκανοῖς ἑτέρους διδάξαι munus illud magisterii commendarent:* ut videre est 2 Tim. ii. 2. nam cum promissio hæc *ad consummationem sæculi se extendat,* Apostoli autem tamdiu victuri non essent, omnino his Christus in apostolorum persona censendus est etiam successores ejus muneris compellasse." *Grotius ad locum.*

The language of Wolfius, in opposition to the very opinion maintained by Bp. Pearce, is equally positive. "Arctius quam par erat, horum verborum vim coercet Amelius, part. ii. p. 230. quando præsentiam Christi de cumulo charismatum extraordinariorum Spiritus Sancti, in miraculis redundantium, exponit; συντέλειαν vero αἰώνων de consummatione seu excidio templi Hierosolymitani, quo stante difficilior futura sit Christianæ doctrinæ propagatio, interpretatur. Certe συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, Matth. xxiv. 3. Marc. xii. 4. et Hebr. ix. 26. quos affert locos, quibus et Matth. xiii. 39, 40. addi poterat, non nisi finem universitatis rerum infert." *Wolfii Curæ Philologicæ in Matth.* xxviii.

Koecher, in his Analecta Philologica, maintains the same interpretation. "Promissionem vero illam non ad omnes Christianos, sed ad eos solum spectare, qui baptizare et docere jubentur; neque tamen ad solos Apostolos restringendam, quod illi faciunt qui συντέλειαν τοῦ αἰῶνος de fine œconomiæ et reipublicæ Judaicæ interpretantur, sed de omnibus futuris Ecclesiæ doctoribus, quippe Apostolorum in officio successoribus intelligendam esse." *Analecta in Evang. S. Matth.* xxviii. 20.

See also Schleusner voce συντέλεια. If we consult our own commentators, we shall find this interpretation supported by the powerful names of Hammond, Whitby, Wells, Clarke, Wilson, Doddridge, Macknight, and

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the continuation of Peace. Abp. Potter declares, that "if we will allow this promise to be explained by the Evangelist himself, or by our Lord's design in making it, we must conclude that it is to be extended to a constant succession of Gospel ministers to the world's end." *Discourse of Church Government*, chap. 4. And Isaac Barrow, asserting in equally plain terms the continuance of the assistance of the Holy Spirit to those, who "still by a settled ministry supply the room of the Apostles and first planters of the Gospel," says, that "by the influence hereof upon the pastors of his Church it is, that our Lord accomplisheth his promise to be with it until the end of the world." *English Works*, vol. iii. Sermon 27. p. 224.

If however, notwithstanding this accumulated weight of authority, further scriptural evidence is required in support of this important doctrine; this evidence may be found in the practice of the Apostles, as recorded in their own writings and history. Hence it will appear, that "the Apostles both in teaching and governing the churches when they were present, had helpers; when they were absent, had substitutes; after their final departures or deaths, left successors." *Bilson, Perpetual Government*, &c. p. 210. These appointments sufficiently prove what *they* understood by our Saviour's promise. For can we suppose, that they would have assumed a right to bestow on others a portion of that commission, by which they themselves acted; that they would have taught them to consider themselves as ministers of Jesus Christ; (1 Tim. iii. 6.) as accountable to Him for their conduct; (Heb. xiii. 17.) as endowed with a particular gift of God by virtue of their ordination; (2 Tim. i. 6.) and therefore empowered to govern and teach his people, and dispense his sacraments; that they would have directed them to perpetuate this gift in the Church (2 Tim. ii. 2. Tit. i. 5.) by the same form of ordination, by which it had been granted to them; unless they had been well assured, that the promise of our Lord was not merely personal; not made to them only, but to their successors also in their sacred office, to the end of time. He then, who seeks for additional proof from Scripture of the divine commission

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under which the Christian priesthood is established, may find it in every instance of apostolic ordination therein recorded, and in every precept, by which they instructed those whom they ordained in the duties of their sacred calling.

NOTE XXIII.

In support of this interpretation see Grotius, Hammond, Pearce, and Wells ad locum. Macknight's Harmony of the Gospels, vol. ii. s. 160. Doddridge, Family Expositor. Tillotson, vol. iii. Serm. 139. Bp. Atterbury, vol. iii. Serm. 7.

NOTE XXIV.

"Before the pastors or governors of the Church had any commission or coactive power derived from princes, states, or commonweals, to make laws for the Church, or for punishing offenders; every member of the visible Church, in what realm or kingdom soever seated, did renounce or abjure all use of such liberty, as every other member of the same kingdom or commonweal, which was no member of the Church, did enjoy. It was not lawful for one member of the visible Church to implead another in matter of controversie or wrong before a foreign judge. And although this astipulation was not legal, (that is, not authorized by any humane law or custom,) yet did it bind them faster than any legal or civil bond.

"*Dare any of you*, (saith St. Paul,) *having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* (1 Cor. vi. 1, 2.) But if some member of this visible Church had opposed this spiritual authority, or rejected this discipline or astipulation, what remedy had the Apostles against them? In primitive times, every one that was partaker of the word, of the sacraments, or of spiritual blessings, did thereby *subject* or oblige himself unto a peculiar kind of judicature or tribunal, unto which no other member of the commonweal or kingdome, which was no participant of the word or sacraments, was

either subject or obliged. And this was the sentence of excommunication; an extraordinary and peculiar kind of judicature, which the Apostles exercised by authority immediately derived from Christ; not by commission or warrant from *princes* or *estates*, not by the positive laws or ordinances of any body civil or ecclesiastick. *I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed.* In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, *when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such a one unto Sathan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*" (1 Cor. v. 3, 4, 5.) *T. Jackson's Works*, tom. iii. book 12. cap. 8.

NOTE XXV.

It probably will not be denied that the Apostles were partakers of the priestly character. "They were admitted to their office in the same manner, wherein our Lord entered upon his; and scarce any power is said to belong to our Lord, which he did not confer on them. Our Lord was anointed from his mother's womb to be a King, Priest, and Prophet," (*Potter on Church Government*, ch. 8.) and the form of words in which he gave his Apostles their commission conveyed to them a sufficient assurance, that they were invested with each of these characters: *As my Father hath sent me, so send I you.* (John xx. 21.) Unless indeed it be granted that they were priests, the existence of a Christian priesthood cannot easily be proved. The present ministers of the Christian Church have no other ground on which they can claim authority to exercise the duties of their sacred function, than that of having derived it "vicaria ordinatione" (*Cyprian. Florentio Epist.* 66. Edit. Oxon. p. 167.) from the Apostles. But as no man can give to others that power which he does not himself possess; unless the Apostles had received the priestly office from our Saviour, they could not have bestowed it on those, whom they ordained. That the Christian ministry is a true priesthood, that the Apostles were themselves priests, and that they transmitted

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their office and authority to their successors, are positions which have been already so ably maintained by Hickes, in his learned work entitled "The Christian Priesthood asserted," that it is only necessary to refer the student to these volumes, for full satisfaction on the subject.

As then it is the priest's office "to stand before God for the people, to pray for them, that is, to bless them, and offer up their prayers, and praises, and sacrifices; and to perform the mystical rites and offices of our religion in the holy Supper and Baptism;" (*Hickes, ut supra*, vol. i. p. 260.) and as we know that the Apostles, occasionally at least, performed the latter offices; we may presume, that, when present at the public service of the churches which they founded, they also fulfilled the other important duties of the priest. We have one instance on record, in which St. Paul clearly did so, (Acts xx. 36.) and it does not seem possible, that the holy Eucharist could have been administered by them at any time, without their offering up at the same time the united prayers and praises of the assembled communicants.

NOTE XXVI.

This position will of course be contested by those, who have been accustomed to draw from the same sources one of their main arguments for the validity of orders conferred by presbyters. The exhortation of the Apostle, (1 Tim. iv. 14.) "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy *with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery*," has been triumphantly referred to, as containing evidence incontestible in favour of presbyterian ordination. But such an interpretation of the passage, however confidently urged, or plausibly defended, should not be hastily admitted by the theological student. He should remember that powerful arguments, and great authorities are to be found on the other side; and on a question of such importance, he will do well to weigh them seriously, before he consent to deviate from the undoubted and uninterrupted practice of the Church for fifteen centuries.

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Waving however, for the present, every advantage which may be derived from historical evidence, it may be useful to recapitulate the statements, by which the argument in favour of presbyterian ordination, drawn from the passage under consideration, has been opposed.

I. It has been maintained, that the gift of which the Apostle speaks was an ordination to a superior rank to that of presbyter, and that therefore the supposition that this was conferred by presbyters involves an absurdity.

II. It has been argued, that the words τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου, refer to the office conferred upon Timothy, and not to the persons who ordained him to it.

III. That, if these words are to be interpreted of an assembly of persons, it by no means follows that they were presbyters properly so called; that is, persons invested *only* with the second order in the priesthood.

IV. That, if this be also conceded, there is nothing in the passage, when compared, as it must in fairness be, with another equally strong, (2 Tim. i. 6.) which proves, that presbyters ever claimed, or exercised by themselves, the power of ordination.

I. When the general language of the two epistles is considered, there will appear sufficient reasons for believing, that Timothy was invested with an office superior in rank and dignity to that of presbyter; and it cannot be disputed that this office, whatever it was, is that which St. Paul speaks of, when he tells him not to neglect *the gift*, τὸ χάρισμα, *which* is *in him*; because the whole tenour of the two epistles plainly shews, that they were written to instruct and encourage him in the due performance of the duties of his station. That this station then was one of dignity and authority, which placed him above the presbyters, made them responsible to him as their superior, and invested him with other and more important duties than those of a pastor in the Church, appears from his being directed, not only to teach, but to command; παράγγελλε ταῦτα καὶ δίδασκε (1 Tim. iv. 11.) to *charge* some, that they teach no other doctrine, παραγγείλῃ τισὶν ἵνα μὴ ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν (1 Tim. i. 3.) from his being instructed in the proper

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manner of receiving accusations against offending presbyters, κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου κατηγορίαν μὴ παραδέχου, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων (1 Tim. v. 19.) from the rules which are laid down for his conduct in dispensing censures and honours, πρεσβυτέρῳ μὴ ἐπιπλήξῃς, ἀλλὰ παρακάλει ὡς πατέρα· (1 Tim. v. 1.) and again, (17.) οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν. The power of ordination plainly entrusted to him (1 Tim. v. 22.) is not here insisted on as a proof of superiority; because perhaps, upon the presbyterian hypothesis, it would confer of itself no preeminence; though, as it is here a power clearly vested in him alone, and to be exercised by him singly, it may not be easy to reconcile it either with the principles or the practice of presbyterian parity. If then, upon an attentive consideration of the duties of that office to which Timothy was called, it appear, that it implied the exercise of powers superior to those of presbyters, it seems to follow, that such a gift could not have been conferred upon him by them. For all spiritual power being derived from the same source, even from Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, it is manifest that no set of men can bestow that ecclesiastical function upon another, which they themselves have received no commission to exercise.

II. It has been asserted by many persons, deficient in no learning which could render them competent to form an opinion upon the subject, that the words τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου are not to be understood of an assembly of presbyters, who laid their hands upon Timothy, but of the office, which was conferred upon him. They would translate the passage thus; "Neglect not the gift of presbytery," that is, the office of the priesthood, "which was given thee by prophesy, with the laying on of hands." Such is the interpretation adopted by Jerome and Aimlinose, (*See Poli Synops. ad locum.—Potter, Church Government*, p. 292.) and by the Fathers of the Nicene Council. And if such authorities be deemed insufficient, the testimony of Calvin may perhaps be received with greater reverence by those, who profess to conform so strictly to his model. "Paulus ipse alibi se, non alios complures, Timotheo manus imposuisse commemorat. Admoneo te (inquit) ut gratiam suscites

quæ in te est per impositionem manuum mearum. (2 Tim. i. 6.) Nam quod in altera epistola de impositione manuum presbyterii dicitur: (1. Tim. iv. 14.) non ita accipio, quasi Paulus de seniorum collegio loquatur: sed hoc nomine ordinationem ipsam intelligo: quasi diceret, Fac ut gratia quam per manuum impositionem recepisti, quum te presbyterum crearem, non sit irrita." *Calvini Institut.* lib. 4. cap. 3. p. 381. Edit. Ludg. Batav. 1654. The interpretation, it must be confessed, is a harsh one; and such as neither the general construction of the language, nor the usual signification of the word πρεσβυτέριον in the New Testament, will justify (vide Schleusner. voce πρεσβυτέριον); and perhaps no advocates for episcopal ordination will hesitate thus far to agree with the learned Vitringa, that "gignendi casus in hac constructione vocum, nos multo liquidius ducit ad τὸ πρεσβυτέριον, hic considerandum veluti causam impositionis manuum, quam ut illius effectum." *See the passage quoted from Vitringa by Wolfius, Curæ Philologicæ*, vol. iv. p. 465.

Such is the sense in which our venerable translators have understood this passage, and in their interpretation we may be contented to rest; satisfied that the cause of episcopacy will never suffer, by adhering to the decision of their discriminating judgment.

III. Indeed it by no means follows, that the passage, thus understood, adds any strength to the cause of presbyterian ordination: for it cannot be conceded, that the word πρεσβυτέριον necessarily means an assembly of presbyters properly so called. "Should *presbytery*," says Potter, "signify in this place a number of presbyters; yet that they were mere presbyters is more than the primitive Fathers, who understood it in that sense, are willing to allow. It is granted, and very much insisted on by those who would exalt presbyters to an equality with bishops, that apostles and bishops are sometimes called presbyters; and why then may not (πρεσβυτέριον) presbytery, signify a college of such presbyters, that is, of apostles and bishops? Or if we attend only to the name of presbytery, why may not this in Greek signify the supreme council, as well as senators, which exactly answers to it, is known to do in Latin? And then the presbytery,

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or senate, may be an assembly of apostles, or one apostle and some bishops, who jointly laid their hands on Timothy, as the twelve did in the ordination of the first deacons. Thus this passage was understood by the author of the Ethiopic Version, in which *the hands of the presbytery* are translated, *the hands of the bishops*. And the same explication is given by St. Chrysostom, Theophylact, and other Greek expositors, who assign this reason for it, *that presbyters cannot ordain a bishop.*' *Potter on Church Government*, ch. 5.

IV. If however it be granted, that the word πρεσβυτέριον *may* here be understood to designate an assembly of presbyters, in the strict acceptation of the term; the passage must still be interpreted with reference to 2 Tim. *i.* 6. and the utmost which can be inferred from it is this; "That presbyters sometimes imposed their hands together with an apostle or bishop; but there is not the least colour to conclude, they always did so, or that they ever did it without a bishop." *Potter, ut supra.* Unless then it can be proved, that this imposition of the hands of the presbytery was not only necessary to the validity of episcopal ordination, but that it was also of itself sufficient to confer the office of the priesthood, without the presence and ministration of a bishop; the language of the Apostle will be of little value to the advocates of presbyterian orders. But on this subject the testimony of history is so decisive, that to contend against it, may well be deemed a hopeless undertaking. It may be confidently asserted, that the records of the whole Church until the time of the Reformation afford but one well authenticated instance of an *attempt* to ordain without a bishop. This was in the instance of Coluthus, one of the twelve presbyters of Alexandria, who taking advantage of the distracted state of the Egyptian Church, then divided between the Arians and the Catholics, "became the head of a party himself; and to propagate his party, took upon him to make ordinations of presbyters, to minister to those of his sect. But all his ordinations were declared void; and this, which is the only example of presbyters ordained by a presbyter, without and against his bishop, tended only most clearly to shew the general sense, en-

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tertained by the Church of the invalidity of all such orders." See *Thorndike's Forbearance*, &c. p. 66. See also Athanasius, as quoted by Potter, p. 286, 287.

Shall it then be said, that other instances *may* have occurred? or shall we "suppose, that the canons of the Church were not observed, because it is not recorded how they were observed?" *Thorndike, ut supra.* Shall the testimony of Jerome be accepted, who, when tracing the ecclesiastical records, with no inclination to exalt the episcopal office; after he has admitted the universal reception of the order itself in the Church, from the days of the Apostles; with a view, as it should seem, of lowering their exclusive powers as much as possible, says, "Quid enim facit, *excepta ordinatione*, episcopus, quod presbyter non facit?" Shall no respect be given to the apostolic canons, which the best authority refers to the end of the second, or beginning of the third century; (*vide Cotelerii Patres Apost.* vol. i. p. 436.) and which positively state the whole power of ordination to be vested in the bishop? Or shall the unvaried practice of the whole Church (a practice, the universality of which is sufficiently testified, by the silence of history respecting any attempt to infringe it, but the one already mentioned) be set aside by a conjecture, that it is possible such variations might not have been recorded? Rather must we yield to the weight of that testimony, which compelled even Calvin to admit, "Veteres hoc sæpe habent, non differre alia re ab episcopo presbyterum, nisi quia ordinandi potestatem non habeat," (*Calvin. Institut.* lib. iv. cap. 4. s. 15.) or the still more honest and decisive admission of the compilers of the Saxon confession; "*Ordinatio ministrorum*, inspectio ecclesiarum, gubernatio studiorum doctrinæ, cura disciplinæ; *hæ summæ res initio commendatæ fuerunt episcopis.*" *Confess. Saxonica, Præfat.* p. 204, 205. *Sylloge Confess.* Edit. Oxon. 1804.

An excellent dissertation upon this subject, and particularly on the testimony of Jerome, so often and so confidently referred to by the presbyterian writers, will be found in "Hobart's Apology for the apostolic Order and its Advocates." Letter XII. and XIII. printed at New York, 1807.

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NOTE XXVII.

The reader may see this authority fully stated by Hammond, in his "Letter of Resolution to six Queres, &c." *Works*, vol. i. p. 515. and by Leslie, in his "Treatise on the Qualifications requisite to administer the Sacraments," *Works*, vol. ii. as well as by many other writers. It is only necessary to add, that the evidence, by which the regular succession of bishops in the universal Church is confirmed, appeared so complete and convincing to the powerful mind of Isaac Barrow, that he hesitates not to use the following strong language, respecting those by whom it is rejected. "I shall only farther add, that if any man be so dully or so affectedly ignorant as not to see the reason of the case, and the dangerous consequences of rejecting this ancient form of discipline; if any be so overweeningly presumptuous, as to question the faith of all history, or to disavow those monuments and that tradition, upon the testimony whereof even the truth and certainty of our religion, and all its sacred oracles do rely; if any be so perversely contentious, as to oppose the custom and current practice of the churches through all ages down to the last age; so self-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or slight the judgment and practice of all the Fathers, (together also with the opinion of the later most grave divines, who have judged episcopal presidency needful, or expedient, where practicable;) so peevishly refractory as to thwart the settled order of that Church, into which he was baptized, together with the law of the country, into which he was born; upon such a person we may look as one utterly invincible and untractable: so weak a judgment, and so strong a will, who can hope by reason to convert? I shall say no more to that point." *Isaac Barrow's English Works*, vol. iii. p. 203, 204.

NOTE XXVIII.

This reasoning from the identity of names, which has been justly styled "λογομαχίαν aut. inanem de vocibus concertationem," (*Hammond*, vol. iv. p. 719.) was first adopted by Jerome; the whole weight and value

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of whose testimony on the subject will be best appreciated by those, who read the learned Dissertations of Dr. Hammond *de Episcopatu*, (see vol. iv. of his Works,) and his Vindication of these Dissertations, (vol. ii.) A very clear and satisfactory view of the question may also be found in "Hobart's Apology for apostolic Order and its Advocates," already referred to, Note XXVI; a work which deserves to be generally known. The same mode of reasoning was employed by Blondel and Salmasius, and has since been repeatedly used, and urged with a pertinacity which cannot easily be accounted for, but upon the supposition of a lamentable failure of more substantial arguments. "When," says Leslie, "we find it given in charge to Timothy, the first bishop of Ephesus, how he was to proceed against his presbyters when they transgressed, to sit in judgment upon them, examine witnesses against them, and pass censures upon them, it is a most impertinent logomachy to argue from the etymology of the words, that notwithstanding of all this a bishop and a presbyter are the same thing: therefore that one text, 1 Tim. v. 19. is sufficient to silence this pitiful clamour of the presbyterians; our English reads it, *Against an elder*, which is the literal translation of the word *presbyter*, κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου, *against a presbyter, receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses; and them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* Now, upon the presbyterian hypothesis, we must say that Timothy had no authority or jurisdiction over that presbyter, against whom he had power to receive accusations, examine witnesses, and pass censures upon him; and that such a presbyter had the same authority over Timothy; which is so extravagant, and against common sense, that I will not stay longer to confute it." *Leslie on the Qualifications necessary to administer the Sacraments. Works*, vol. ii. p. 722.

NOTE XXIX.

Πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε, ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ, καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ὡς τοῖς Ἀποστόλοις· τοὺς δὲ διακόνους ἐντρέπεσθε ὡς Θεοῦ ἐντολήν. Μηδεὶς χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τι πρασσέτω τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. Ἐκείνη βεβαία

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εὐχαριστία ἡγείσθω ἡ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπίσκοπον ὄσα, ἢ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ· Ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω· ὥσπερ ὅπου ἂν ἦ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία. Οὐκ ἐξὸν χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν, οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν· ἀλλ' ὁ ἂν ἐκεῖνος δοκιμάσῃ τοῦτο καὶ τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστον, ἵνα ἀσφαλὲς ᾖ καὶ βεβαιὸν πᾶν ὁ πράσσεται. Ὁ τιμῶν ἐπίσκοπον, ὑπὸ Θεοῦ τετιμήται· ὁ λάθρα ἐπισκόπου τι πράσσων, τῷ διαβόλῳ λατρεύει. *Ignatius ad Smyrnæos*, s. 8. 9. Edit. Pearson.

Πάντα ὃν πέμπει ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης εἰς ἰδίαν οἰκονομίαν οὕτως δεῖ ἡμᾶς αὐτὸν δέχεσθαι, ὡς αὐτὸν τὸν πέμψαντα. τὸν οὖν ἐπίσκοπον δῆλον, ὅτι ὡς αὐτὸν τὸν κύριον δεῖ προσβλέπειν. *Ignatius ad Ephes*, s. 6. Edit. Pearson.

NOTE XXX.

"Grant to the episcopalian, that the supremacy of bishops prevailed throughout the primitive Church, in the third or beginning of the fourth century, and he contends that this is sufficient evidence of its being an apostolic institution. Thus does he reason: The Apostles certainly instituted a ministry in the Church. This supremacy of bishops therefore must have been either of apostolic institution, or it must have been an innovation or usurpation. If it had been an *innovation* or *usurpation* on apostolic order, it could not have received universal sanction, at a period so near the apostolic age, without *opposition*, and without the most explicit and marked *record* of so extraordinary a change or usurpation. But no such record appears; no tradition even of any such event is mentioned in any of the writers of the three first centuries. No such change or usurpation, therefore, could have taken place in the constitution of the primitive Church. The supremacy of bishops, therefore, which universally prevailed in the third or beginning of the fourth century, could not have been an *innovation* or *usurpation*. It must, therefore, have been an *apostolic institution*." *Hobart's Apology*, p. 205.

The argument from the deficiency of any explicit and satisfactory record of this supposed change or usurpation in the government and ministry of the Church, is thus further developed by the same able writer.

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"Whether effected by violence, by gradual usurpation, or by general consent, it would have been a fundamental change; a change that would have entirely altered the features of the Church. It would have constituted a new and marked æra in her history. We would surely expect to find in contemporary writers some notices of an event, one of the most extraordinary that could have occurred. But we search the ecclesiastical writers of the three first centuries. Not even any faint traces of this change or usurpation is to be found in them. The venerable Ignatius, the disciple of the Apostle St. John; Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, the contemporary of Ignatius; Clemens of Alexandria; and the celebrated Tertullian, all of whom flourished in the second century, afford us no light in tracing this change or usurpation, in ascertaining either its gradual advances, or the bold and sudden assault by which it subverted apostolic order, and mounted to universal dominion. Equally silent as to this most momentous occurrence are Origen and Cyprian, Fathers of the third century. But perhaps Eusebius, the historian of the fourth century, affords irrefragable evidence of it. Alas! Eusebius, to whom, even if every record of preceding times had been swept away, tradition would have handed down some account of this memorable innovation on apostolic order, is silent concerning it. He gives not the most distant hint that the supremacy of bishops, which was universal in his day, had any other origin than apostolic institution. The 'famous testimony of Jerome' is the 'forlorn hope' of those who impeach episcopacy as an innovation. And lo! when we open Jerome, we find his 'famous testimony' is a matter of *opinion*, and that in many passages he expressly records the apostolic institution of the supremacy of bishops. But were the testimony of Jerome as clear as 'the sun shining in his strength,' it would not be worthy of a moment's credit, standing as it does single, and unsupported even by any faint hint of those writers who lived nearer to the period of this alleged change, and some of whom must have been contemporary with it." *Hobart's Apology*, p. 213.

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NOTE XXXI.

"Take notice, I beseech you," says Bp. Hall to Graham Bp. of Orkney, who had publicly renounced his episcopal office and character, "what the German divines of the Augsburgh Confession have freely professed to this purpose, who taking occasion to speak of canonical ordination, brake forth into these words following; 'Sed episcopi,' &c. 'But the Bishops,' say they, 'do either force our priests to disclaim and condemn this kind of doctrine which we have here confessed, or by a certain new and unheard of kind of cruelty, put the poor and innocent souls to death: these causes are they which hinder our priests from receiving their bishops; so as the cruelty of the bishops is the cause why that canonical government or policy *which we earnestly desired to conserve* is in some places now dissolved.' And not long after in the same chapter; 'Prorsus hic iterum,' &c. 'And now here again we desire to testify it to the world, that we will willingly conserve the ecclesiastical and canonical government, if only the bishops will cease to exercise cruelty upon our churches. *This our will shall excuse us before God*, and before all the world, unto all posterity, that it may not be justly imputed to us, that the authority of bishops is impaired amongst us; when men shall hear and read that we, earnestly deprecating the unjust cruelty of the bishops, could obtain no equal measure at their hands.' Thus those learned divines and protestants of Germany; wherein all the world sees the apologist professeth for them, that they greatly desired to conserve the government of bishops; that they were altogether unwillingly driven from it; that it was utterly against their heart that it should have been impaired or weakened; that it was only the personal cruelty and violence of the Romish persecutors, in a bloody opposition to the doctrines of the Gospel, which was then excepted against." *Bp. Hall, Episcopacy by divine Right; Works*, vol. iii. p. 126. folio.

In confirmation of this assertion of Bp. Hall, strong proofs may be produced from the writings of the foreign Reformers. Melancthon, upon various occa-

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sions, testified his veneration for the episcopal order; his conviction of its utility; his desire that it might be retained; and he declares, in his own name, and that of the churches whose sentiments he was required to express on different public occasions, that the tyrannical and corrupt behaviour of the Romish bishops, and not any objection to their dignity or office, compelled the Protestants to renounce their authority.

"Opus est in ecclesia gubernatoribus, qui vocatos ad ministeria ecclesiastica explorent, et ordinent, et judicia ecclesiastica exerceant, et inspiciant doctrinam sacerdotum. Et ut maxime nulli essent episcopi, tamen creari tales oportet. Tantum optamus, ut hi qui nunc sunt episcopi, inspiciant doctrinam, et sanam doctrinam curent in ecclesiis sibi commissis fideliter tradi: hoc si facerent, nemo deberet obedientiam recusare." *Consilium de moderanda controversia in articulis religionis præcipuis, ad Gallos.* 1536. *Melancthonis Opera*, vol. iv. p. 835.

"Honestissime semper et gravissime, et eodem modo respondimus, non belligerari nos cum ecclesiastica politia. Sed cum episcopi sinceram evangelii doctrinam improbent, cum interficiant nostros sacerdotes, homines pios et eruditos, necesse est nos regulæ Paulinæ obtemperare si quis aliud evangelium docet, anathema sit." *Præfatio ad Acta Ratisbonensia; Melancthonis Opera*, vol. iv. p. 732. "Facile retinerent episcopi auctoritatem si emendatis quibusdam abusibus, consulerent piorum conscientiis. Id sæpe testati sumus, et hanc ad concordiam viam esse judicamus, præsertim in Ecclesia, in qua lucere debet, et eminere gubernatorum mansuetudo." *Concionatores Augustanæ Confessionis. Vide Acta Ratisbonensia, ad finem. Melancthonis Opera*, vol. iv. p. 758.

"Facile autem possent episcopi legitimam obedientiam retinere, si non urgerent servare traditiones, quæ bona conscientia servari non possunt."—"Non petunt Ecclesiæ ut episcopi honoris sui jactura sarciant concordiam. Nunc non id agitur, ut dominatio eripiatur episcopis, sed hoc unum petitur, ut patiantur evangelium pure doceri, et relaxent paucas quasdam observationes, quæ sine peccato servari non possunt." *Con-*

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fessio Fidei exhib. Carolo 5^to^. *Imperatori, anno* 1530. *in comitiis Augustæ; Melancthonis Opera,* vol. i. p. 38. Edit. Witteberg. 1601.

Upon this subject see also Thorndike's "Discourse of the Forbearance or Penalties which a due Reformation requires." p. 73. in which he states the necessity of their case, to be the defence set up by the foreign Protestants for their rejection of bishops; and declares that apology to be the only one which could be admitted.

NOTE. XXXII.

The language of Hooker is well worthy the attention of those, who would form a temperate opinion on this subject, and learn to *hold the truth in charity*. "For mine own part," says he, "although I see that certain reformed churches, the Scotish especially and French, have not that which best agreeth with the sacred Scripture, I mean the government that is by bishops, inasmuch as both those churches are fallen under a different kind of regiment; which to remedy it is for the one altogether too late, and too soon for the other during their present affliction and trouble; this their defect and imperfection I had rather lament in such a case then exagitate, considering that men oftentimes, without any fault of their own, may be driven to want that kind of polity or regiment which is best; and to content themselves with that, which either the irremediable error of former times, or the necessity of the present hath cast upon them." *Hooker's Eccles. Pol.* b. 3. p. 421. vol. i. Edit. Oxon.

NOTE XXXIII.

It is worthy observation that Jerome, whose judgment has been so much relied upon by the opponents of episcopacy; even when most desirous to lower the respect and reverence, which this order then every where received; becomes an unintentional witness to its utility, as the guardian of Christian unity. In the famous passage, so often cited to prove that there was a time, when the Church was not governed by bishops, (*Hieron. in Tit.* 1.) he maintains, that they were ap-

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pointed by universal consent, as the only remedy for the schisms by which the peace of Christians was then disturbed. "Antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis, Ego Pauli, Ego Appollo, Ego autem Cephæ, communi presbyterorum concilio Ecclesiæ gubernabantur: postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi; in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis Ecclesiæ cura pertineret, et *schismatum semina tollerentur.*"

In another place he explicitly declares that the safety of the Church depends on supporting the episcopal dignity, (*advers. Lucif.*) "Ecclesiæ salus ex summi sacerdotis dignitate dependet, cui nisi exors quædam potestas et ab omnibus eminens detur, *tot in Ecclesia efficientur schismata quot sacerdotes.*" An opportunity has already occurred of adverting to the entire worthlessness of Jerome's testimony, as an opponent of episcopacy. But if we hesitate to admit his evidence upon an historical fact, supposed to have happened so long before his time, as entirely to prevent him from appearing as a credible witness in its favour; if we receive his arguments with diffidence, on a subject which many personal considerations prevented his viewing with impartiality; and if our distrust is still increased by our knowledge of the impetuous and irritable disposition of the man: yet we cannot but admit the full weight of those concessions, which the force of truth extorted from him, notwithstanding they were so destructive of his own hypothesis. His enmity to a particular bishop urged him as much as possible to depreciate the whole order; but his zeal for the preservation of the faith and peace of the Church obliged him to maintain its prerogatives as their best protection; and to allow the full value of that office, the divine origin and authenticity of which, a momentary impulse of indignation had impelled him to deny. Had he lived in later times; had his lot been cast in those unhappy days, when whole Christian communities, yielding to the untoward circumstances of their situation, deviated into that "commune presbyterorum concilium," which he would fain

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have represented as the primitive model; he would have seen his opinion of the utility of episcopal superintendance fully and lamentably verified, by the mischiefs which attended its interruption. The seeds of schism were indeed abundantly sown at that fatal period; and evidence is now before the world, sufficient to satisfy every unprejudiced person, that if the unity of the primitive Church be ever restored, it must be by the universal adoption of the primitive and apostolic form of church government. The following strong passage from an earlier Father may be cited to prove, that the same effects have always resulted from resisting the regularly constituted authority in the Church.

"Neque enim aliunde hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata, quam inde quod sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur, nec unus in Ecclesia ad tempus sacerdos, et ad tempus Judex vice Christi cogitatur: cui si secundum magisteria divina obtemperaret fraternitas universa, nemo adversum sacerdotum collegium quidquam moveret; nemo post divinum judicium, post populi suffragium, post coepiscoporum consensum; judicem se jam non episcopi, sed Dei faceret: nemo dissidio unitatis, Christi Ecclesiam scinderet; nemo sibi placens ac tumens seorsim foris hæresim novam conderet, nisi si ita est aliquis sacrilegæ temeritatis ac perditæ mentis, ut putet sine Dei judicio fieri sacerdotem." *Cypriani Epist.* 59. Edit. Oxon. p. 129.

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SERMON III.

NOTE XXXIV.

"OBJICIUNT *primo* indifferentistæ: delectari Deum religionum ac cultus varietate, uti etiam creaturarum diversitate summam suam sapientiam manifestet; ita inde quoque Deum gloriam capere, quod variis modis ab hominibus colatur; aliter ab ethnicis quorum cultus atque cæremoniæ etiam sint diversissimæ; aliter a Judæis atque Turcis; aliter a Christianis, qui iterum in varias divisi sint partes." *Stapferi Instit. Theol. Polem.* vol. iv. p. 48. "Ita olim Themistius, celebris inter Gentiles orator atque philosophus, Joviani, Valentis, et Valentiniani temporibus florens, religionum indifferentiam docuit; et imperatores Christianos ad utriusque religionis, tam Christianæ quam gentilis tolerantiam hortatur, dum oratione 12. ad Valentem Imper. pag. 159. et Orat. 5. ad Jovianum pag. 69. inter alia dicit, Deum ipsum cultuum ipsorum varietate delectari, hominesque per quandam æmulationem ad se colendum vividius impellere." *Stapfer. ut supra*, vol. iv. p. 17.

If however this had been maintained only by a heathen philosopher, desirous in any way of providing against the utter destruction of his favourite superstition, it would have been scarcely worth while to enter the field against such an antagonist. But the whole herd of modern sceptics have been obliged to adopt the same position; and to pave the way for the introduction of their own impious doctrines, by endeavouring to inculcate a belief, that all modes of faith are equally indifferent in the sight of the Divine Being; who regards not the doctrinal persuasions, but the moral conduct of his worshippers. Nay, even among those who profess to be Christians, some have been unhappily found,

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who have recommended such pernicious dogmas, by an external carriage interesting from its simplicity, by an undeviating gentleness and suavity of deportment, and a moral conduct generally blameless. Their distinguishing doctrine of a divine light within, independent of external revelation, by which whatever is necessary to salvation may be known, destroys at once all distinctions between modes of faith and external professions of religion. For hence, as the learned author already referred to well observes; "Sequitur religionum differentiam nullum esse, dum unusquisque in qualibet religione vi luminis hujus interni, salvari queat." That this is not an inference deduced from their positions by the ingenuity of the author himself, but clearly and explicitly stated by themselves, he has sufficiently proved by the following quotation from the celebrated Apology of Barclay; which still continues the standard of authority with that sect, whose greatest literary ornament its author has been reckoned. The passage quoted in Latin by Stapfer, vol. iv. p. 20. stands thus in the English edition. "Under this *Church* and its denomination are comprehended all, and as many, of whatsoever *nation, kindred, tongue, or people* they may be, though outwardly strangers, and remote from those who profess *Christ* and *Christianity* in words, and have the benefit of the Scriptures, as become obedient to the *holy light* and *testimony of God* in their hearts, so as to become sanctified by it, and cleansed from the evils of their ways." Again: "There may be members therefore of this *Catholic Church*, both among *Heathens, Turks, Jews*, and all the several sorts of *Christians*, men and women of integrity and simplicity of heart, who though blinded in some things in their understanding, and perhaps burdened with the superstitions and formality of the several sects in which they are ingrossed, yet being upright in their hearts before the Lord, chiefly aiming and labouring to be delivered from iniquity, and loving to follow righteousness, are by the secret touches of this *holy light* in their souls enlivened and quickened, thereby secretly united to God, and there-through become true members of this *Catholic Church*." *Barclay's Apology*, Edit. Baskerville, quarto 1765. p. 233.

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NOTE XXXV.

"Faith is a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his Apostles." *Isaac Barrow on the Creed; Works*, vol. ii. *Serm.* II. p. 13. "To believe," says Pearson, "as the word stands in the front of the Creed, and not only so, but is diffused through every article and proposition of it, is to assent to the whole and every part of it, as to a certain and infallible truth revealed by God (who by reason of his infinite knowledge cannot be deceived, and by reason of his transcendant holiness cannot deceive) and delivered unto us in the writings of the blessed Apostles and Prophets, immediately inspired, moved, and acted by God, out of whose writings this brief sum of necessary points of faith was first collected." *Pearson on the Creed*, Art. I. vol. i. p. 22. 8vo. Edit. Oxon. 1797.

NOTE XXXVI.

"Quia autem sæpe fit, ut sermo scriptoris multiplices patiatur interpretationes, unica autem tantum vera esse possit; quænam sit vera ex legibus hermeneuticis deniendum est," &c. *Stapfer. Inst. Theol. Polem.* tom. i. p. 5.

Cicero, speaking of the various opinions held by the philosophers concerning the nature of the Deity, though he professes his inability to determine if any of them were right; hesitates not to admit this as an axiom, that more than one could not be true. "Quorum opiniones cum tam variæ sint, tamque inter se dissidentes: alterum fieri profecto potest, ut earum nulla; alterum certe non potest, ut plus una vera sit." *De Nat. Deorum.* lib. i. s. 2.

NOTE XXXVII.

While it is contended that, by this term, "the faith," certain fundamental truths are always meant; it may be necessary to state, that by fundamental truths, those only are intended which are absolutely essential to Christianity; those which distinguish it from every other system of religion, and which cannot be denied

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without involving its destruction. "Articulus fundamentalis est talis veritas, quæ ad ipsam religionis Christianæ essentiam pertinet, ut illa sublata, ipsa etiam vera religionis forma atque essentia pereat." *Stapfer. Inst. Theol. Pol.* vol. i. p. 513. Among these fundamental truths, the following are to be reckoned: We find them plainly revealed in the Scriptures; they are peculiar to our holy religion; they form essential parts of that plan of redemption, on which the Christian covenant is built; and as such, unless we believe them, we have no claim to be included in the number of those, who have embraced "the faith" of Christians. They who are established in the faith of the Gospel, believe then, upon the authority of Scripture, that the Word was God, and was in the beginning with God; and that, as God, he created all things, (John i. 1—3.) That the same divine Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (v. 14.) That this God incarnate was Jesus Christ, (Col. ii. 9.) the Saviour of the world, (1 John iv. 14.) That in this character he made atonement upon the cross for our sins, (Rom. v. 11. Col. i. 20.) rose again from the grave for our justification, (Rom. iv. 25.) and now sitteth at the right hand of God, (Col. iii. 1.) where he ever liveth to make intercession for us, (Heb. vii. 25.) The same Scriptures teach the true believer, that the Holy Ghost is God; for they record our Saviour's express command, that all his disciples should be baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost, in common with that of the Father and the Son; (Matt. xxviii. 19.) and they declare, that this divine Person has undertaken the office of the Comforter; (John xiv. 26.) the Guide; (John xvi. 13.) and Instructor; the Helper, (Rom. viii. 26.) and the Sanctifier, (2 Thess. ii. 13.) of Christians. He is farther informed by them, that, after this life, there shall be a day of final judgment and retribution, when all men shall rise again with their bodies, and give account of their own works before the tribunal of Christ; who having passed sentence upon them, according to the dictates of his unerring wisdom and impartial justice, shall consign the wicked unto everlasting punishment, but receive the righteous unto life eternal. (Matt. 25. et al. ss. passim.) I am aware that there are

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some who call themselves Christians, by whom it may be objected, that I am here assuming these doctrines to be delivered in the Scriptures, instead of proving what they would be prepared to combat. That proof however has been already so ably, so repeatedly stated, that an investigation, which would necessarily lead us far from the object of immediate enquiry, may well be spared on the present occasion.

NOTE XXXVIII.

It has been maintained by some learned men, that the Apostles' Creed was really the composition of these holy and inspired teachers. Dr. Comber, in his Companion to the Temple, *Works*, vol. i. p. 132. scruples not to affirm, that this position can be abundantly proved by the unanimous testimony of all antiquity. When however the evidence, which has been produced on the subject, is duly weighed, it will perhaps be found by no means so satisfactory as might be expected; for it will resolve itself into little more than the assertions of Ruffinus. We shall probably therefore be justified in adhering to the opinion of Bp. Bull; that this Creed, although it contains the doctrine which the Apostles taught, was certainly not composed by them, in the form in which it is now received in the Church. "Symbolum dictum Apostolicum, ut doctrinæ Apostolorum conforme sit, minime tamen totidem verbis, eaque forma et methodo, qua hodie conspicitur, ab ipsis Apostolis dictatum aut compositum fuisse abunde confirmavit vir summus Joannes Gev. Vossius in Dissertationibus suis de tribus Symbolis, Dissert. 1ma. *Judicium Eccles. Cathol.* cap. v. ss. 2, 3. For a view of the argument on both sides, the reader may be referred to Ashwell's Fides Apostolica, Oxon. 1653; Heylin's Theologia Veterum; Comber's Companion to the Temple; Bingham's Eccles. Ant. b. 10. c. 3. Abp. Usher de Symbolo Romano; Vossius; &c. It should however be observed, that, although we may not allow this Creed to be the composition of the Apostles; it by no means follows, that no forms were in use in their time, or sanctioned by their approbation. There are certainly several expressions in the writings of St. Paul, which seem to

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refer to some known formulary of faith. He speaks to the Romans of τύπος διδαχῆς, (Rom. vi. 17.) and expressly calls it a παράδοσις, or form delivered to them. He charges those who have the gift of prophecy to use it according to the *analogy* or proportion of *the faith*: κατ' ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως, (Rom. xii. 6.) He is urgent with Timothy, that he should hold fast *the form of sound words*, ὑποτύπωσιν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων, which he had heard of him, (2 Tim. i. 13.) And to the Hebrews he objects, that they had need to be taught again which be *the first principles of the oracles of God*, τίνα τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν λογίων τοῦ Θεοῦ, (Heb. v. 12.) See *Wolfii Curæ Philol. ad loc. citat.* It may perhaps be alleged, that all these passages will bear a more enlarged and comprehensive meaning; and will refer generally to the whole doctrine of that Gospel, which St. Paul preached. But still it may be answered, that the former is the more natural signification of the words; and that the numerous expressions of a similar kind to be found in the Apostle's writings, seem very much to favour the idea, which is in itself sufficiently probable, that the Apostles used several creeds or short abstracts of the Christian faith; which, though they might have differed somewhat in form, agreed altogether in doctrine; and formed the basis or groundwork of that creed, afterwards generally adopted under the name of the Apostles' Creed, because it contained the sum and substance of them all.

NOTE XXXIX.

Κωφώθητε ἕν, ὅταν ὑμῖν χωρὶς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ λαλῇ τις, τοῦ ἐκ γένους Δαβὶδ, τοῦ ἐκ Μαρίας, ὃς ἀληθῶς ἐγεννήθη ἔφαγέν τε καὶ ἔπιεν, ἀληθῶς ἐδιώχθη ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου, ἀληθῶς ἐσταυρώθη καὶ ἀπέθανεν, βλεπόντων τῶν ἐπουρανίων, ἐπιγείων, καὶ ὑποχθονίων· ὃς καὶ ἀληθῶς ἠγέρθη ἀπὸ νεκρῶν, ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ· κατὰ τὸ ὁμοίωμα, ὡς καὶ ἡμᾶς τοὺς πιστεύοντας αὐτῷ οὕτως ἐγερεῖ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἧ χωρὶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ζῆν οὐκ ἔχομεν. *Ignatii Epist. ad Trallianos*, s. 9. Edit. Pearson, p. 34.

NOTE XL.

Ἡ μὲν γὰρ Ἐκκλησία, καίπερ καθ' ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης ἕως

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περάτων τῆς γῆς διεσπαρμένη παρὰ δὲ τῶν Ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν ἐκείνων μαθητῶν παραλαβοῦσα τὴν εἰς ἕνα Θεὸν πατέρα παντοκράτορα, τὸν πεποιηκότα τὸν οὐρανὸν, καὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ τὰς θαλάσσας, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς, πίστιν· καὶ εἰς ἕνα Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν σαρκωθέντα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας· καὶ εἰς πνεῦμα ἅγιον, τὸ διὰ τῶν προφητῶν κεκηρυχὸς τὰς οἰκονομίας, καὶ τὰς ἐλεύσεις, καὶ τὴν ἐκ Παρθένου γέννησιν, καὶ τὸ πάθος, καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἐκ νεκρῶν, καὶ τὴν ἔνσαρκον εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνάληψιν τοῦ ἠγαπημένου Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν, καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐν τῇ δοξῇ τοῦ Πατρὸς παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ, ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα, καὶ ἀναστῆσαι πᾶσαν σάρκα πάσης ἀνθρωποτητος, ἵνα Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, καὶ Θεῷ, καὶ σωτῆρι, καὶ βασιλεῖ, κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς τοῦ ἀοράτου, πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται αὐτῷ, καὶ κρίσιν δικαίαν ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι ποιήσηται· τὰ μὲν πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας, καὶ ἀγγελοὺς παραβεβηκότας, καὶ ἐν ἀποστασίᾳ γεγονότας, καὶ τοὺς ἀσεβεῖς, καὶ ἀδίκους, καὶ ἀνόμους, καὶ βλασφήμους τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς τὸ αἰώνιον πῦρ πέμψῃ· τοῖς δὲ δικαίοις, καὶ ὁσίοις, καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τετηρηκόσι, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ αὐτοῦ διαμεμενηκόσι τοῖς ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, τοῖς δὲ ἐκ μετανοίας, ζωὴν χαρισάμενος, ἀφθαρσίαν δωρήσεται, καὶ δόξαν αἰωνίαν περιποίησῃ.

Τοῦτο τὸ κήρυγμα παραλαβοῦσα, καὶ ταύτην τὴν πίστιν, ὡς προέφαμεν, ἡ Ἐκκλησία, καίπερ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ διεσπαρμένη, ἐπιμελῶς φυλάσσει, ὡς ἕνα οἶκον οἰκοῦσα· καὶ ὁμοίως πιστεύει τούτοις, ὡς μίαν ψυχὴν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχουσα καρδίαν, καὶ συμφώνως ταῦτα κηρύσσει, καὶ διδάσκει, καὶ παραδίδωσιν, ὡς ἓν στόμα κεκτημένη· καὶ γὰρ αἱ κατὰ τὸν κόσμον διάλεκτοι ἀνόμοιαι ἀλλ' ἡ δύναμις τῆς παραδόσεως μία καὶ ἡ αὐτή. *Irenæus adversus Hæreses*, lib. i. cap. 2, 3.

NOTE XLI.

"Regula est autem fidei, ut jam hinc quid defendamus profiteamur, illa scilicet qua creditur, unum omnino Deum esse; nec alium præter mundi conditorem; qui universa de nihilo produxerit, per verbum suum primo omnium demissum: id Verbum filium ejus appellatum, in nomine Dei varie visum a Patriarchis, in Prophetis semper auditum, postremo delatum ex spiritu patris Dei et virtute, in virginem Mariam, carnem factum in utero ejus, et ex ea natum egisse Jesum Christum: exinde prædicasse novam legem, et novam pro-

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missionem regni cælorum: virtutes fecisse: fixum cruci; tertia die resurrexisse; in cælos ereptum sedisse ad dexteram Patris: misisse vicariam vim Spiritus sancti, qui credentes agat: venturum cum claritate, ad sumendos sanctos in vitæ æternæ et promissorum cælestium fructum et ad profanos adjudicandos igni perpetuo, facta utriusque partis resuscitatione cum carnis restitutione. Hæc regula a Christo, ut probabitur instituta, nullas habet apud nos quæstiones, nisi quas hæreses inferunt, et quæ hæreticos faciunt." *Tertulliani de Præscript. Hæreticor.* p. 206. Edit. Rigalt.

NOTE XLII.

"Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis, et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum omnipotentem, mundi conditorem, et filium ejus Jesum Christum, natum ex virgine Maria, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, tertia die resuscitatum a mortuis, receptum in cælis, sedentem nunc ad dexteram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos per carnis etiam resurrectionem." *Tertulliani de Virginibus veland.* Edit. Rigalt. p. 173.

NOTE XLIII.

Of this celebrated council we have the following interesting account. Ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς παρούσης χορείας, ἐπισκόπων μὲν πληθὸς ἦν τριακοσίων ἀριθμὸν ὑπεραποντίζουσα· ἑπομένων δὲ πάτραις πρεσβυτέρων, καὶ διακόνων, ἀκολούθων τε πλείστων ὅσων ἑτέρων· ἐφ' ἧν ἀριθμὸς εἰς κατάληψιν· τῶν δὲ τῷ Θεῷ λειτουργῶν οἱ μὲν διέπρεπον σοφίας λόγῳ, οἱ δὲ βίου στερρότητι καὶ καρτερίας ὑπομονῇ· οἱ δέ τῷ μέσῳ τρόπῳ κατεκοσμοῦντο· ἦσαν τε τούτων οἱ μὲν χρόνων μήκει τετιμημένοι· οἱ δὲ νεότητι καὶ ψυχῆς ἀκμῇ διαλαμπόντες· οἱ δὲ ἄρτι παρελθόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τῆς λειτουργίας δρομόν. *Gelasii Hist. Concil. Nicæn. apud Concil. general.* tom. ii. p. 156.

The object for which this great council was convened is thus expressed by Constantine himself. Πεῖραν λαβὼν ἐκ τῆς τῶν κοινῶν εὐπραξίας, ὅση τῆς θείας δυνάμεως πέφυκε χάρις, τοῦτον καὶ πρὸ πάντων ἔκρινα εἶναί μοι σκοπὸν προσήκειν, ὅπως παρὰ τοῖς μακαριωτάτοις τῆς καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας πλήθεσι πίστις μία καὶ εἰλικρινὴς ἀγάπη, ὁμογνωμῶν τε εὐσέβεια περὶ τὸν παντοκράτορα Θεὸν σπουδῆς. ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ τοῦτο ἕτερος

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οὐχ οἷον τε ἦν ἀκλινῆ καὶ βεβαίαν ἴασιν λαβεῖν εἰ μὴ εἰς ταὐτὸν πάντων ὁμοῦ, ἦγεν τῶν πλείονων ἐπισκόπων συνελθόντων ἑκάστου τῶν προσήκοντων τῇ ἁγιωτάτῃ θρησκείᾳ διάκρισις γένοιτο· τότε ἕνεκα κ. τ. λ. *Constantinus ad Episcopos qui Concilio non interfuerunt. Conc. gen.* tom. ii. p. 261.

NOTE XLIV.

"Concilii primi æcumenici Nicææ habiti, summa fuit semper apud Catholicos omnes auctoritas atque existimatio; neque sane immerito. Nunquam synodum, quæ potius universalis aut libera dici mereretur, nunquam cœtum Episcoporum atque Antistitum Ecclesiæ augustiorem et sanctiorem, post denatos Apostolos, vidit Christianus orbis." *Bulli Defensio Fidei Nicænæ, Proœm.*

NOTE XLV.

"The true nature of the faith of a Christian, as the state of Christ's Church now stands, and shall continue to the end of the world, consists in this, that it is an assent unto truths credible upon the testimony of God delivered unto us in the writings of the Apostles and Prophets." *Pearson on the Creed,* vol. i. p. 22. Edit. Oxon. 8vo. 1797.

"Dogmata, quæ ex rationis principiis de religione cognoscuntur, dicimur *scire;* ea vero, quæ per Revelationem nobis innotescunt, dicimur *credere*; unde illorum per Fidem certi reddimur, uti priorum per *Scientiam.* Propterea illi, qui Religionis Revelatæ principium vel ex tota vel ex parte inficiantur, vocantur vel Infideles, vel Increduli, dum fidei nullum plane locum dant, vel saltem præcipuum ejus objectum non admittunt." *Stapferi Instit. Theol. Polem.* vol. i. p. 556.

NOTE XLVI.

"It is most infallibly certain, that God, being infinitely wise, cannot be deceived; being infinitely good, cannot deceive. And upon these two immoveable pillars standeth the authority of the testimony of God. For since we cannot doubt the witness of any one, but by questioning his ability, as one who may be ignorant of that which he affirmeth, and so deceived; or by excepting against his integrity, as one who may affirm that

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which he knoweth to be false, and so have a purpose to deceive us: where there is no place for either of these exceptions, there can be no doubt of the truth of the testimony." *Pearson, ut sup.* vol. i. p. 11.

NOTE XLVII.

"Some things there are, which, though not evident of themselves, nor seen by any necessary connection to their causes or effects, notwithstanding appear to most as true by some external relation to other truths; but yet so, as the appearing truth still leaves a possibility of falsehood with it, and therefore doth but incline to an assent. In which case, whatsoever is thus apprehended, if it depend upon real arguments, is not yet called credible, but probable; and an assent to such a truth is not properly faith, but opinion. But when any thing propounded to us is neither apparent to our sense, nor evident to our understanding, in and of itself, neither certainly to be collected from any clear and necessary connection with the cause from which it proceedeth, or the effects which it naturally produceth, nor is taken up upon any real arguments, or reference to other acknowledged truths, and yet notwithstanding appeareth to us true, not by a manifestation, but attestation of the truth, and so moveth us to assent not of itself, but by virtue of the testimony given to it; this is said properly to be credible; and an assent unto this, upon such credibility, is in the proper notion faith or belief." *Pearson, ut sup.* vol. i. p. 5.

NOTE XLVIII.

South has illustrated this with his usual force. "Christ," says he, "demands the homage of your understanding. He will have your *reason* bend to him, you must put your heads under his feet. And we know, that heretofore, he who had the leprosy in this part, was to be pronounced unclean. A poisoned reason, an infected judgment, is Christ's greatest enemy. And an error in the judgment is like an impostume in the head, which is always noisome, and frequently mortal." *South's Sermons,* vol. i. Serm. III. p. 88.

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NOTE XLIX.

"I will suppose *reason* to be as *excellent* as the remarker can conceive it, and yet this founds it no title to be a guide in religion: for had reason been sufficient to be a guide in these matters, what need had God to furnish us with another? If reason could possibly have led us into the knowledge of what we are to do and believe, God would certainly have spared the mission both of his servants and his Son: but if revelation therefore be appointed for our guide, (and who is so bold as to deny it?) what have we to alledge why reason should pretend to usurp its character, and invade its office?" *The Excellency of Reason, &c. Vide E. Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. *ad fin.*

NOTE L.

"Faith itself is an *act of reason*, as really and as truly as any other *assent* founded upon *natural principles*. For example, we believe such a doctrine, *because* we find it in the *Scriptures;* we believe the *Scriptures*, because they speak the mind and will of *God;* we believe that they do so, *because* they have been *proved* to carry with them all possible marks, outward and inward, of a *divine authority*, which a wise and good God would never suffer to be set to any *imposture*, to lead mankind into an *inevitable error;* so that if God be true and just, that is, if there be a God, our faith is *well grounded*. And now why should not an assent, thus *founded* upon the *nature* and *reason* of *things*, be looked upon as an *act of reason?*" *Waterland's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 68.

"When the Deist confirms his prejudice against the Christian revelation from this argument, that all religions do equally pretend to the same original, that is, to come from God; I allow that reason has here a proper province: let it therefore be called in: let Reason enquire, and then judge, and say whether there is any other religion so worthy of God as the Christian is? whether there is any whose doctrines are so convincing, and whose miracles are so demonstrative? nay, whether ever there was any thing of human faith, that came so

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attested as our religion does, and failed of belief in the world?" *E. Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 57.

NOTE LI.

"Although reason is not to prescribe the matter of our belief; revelation is to do that; yet reason is a proper judge whether such or such a matter is revealed or no; for this consists only in apprehending the sense of plain words; which every man's understanding has an equal right to pretend to." *E. Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 75.

"The use of reason is more *special* in stating and clearing the *particular doctrines* of Christianity. Christians of all sorts, however divided in opinions, yet plead the same Scriptures commonly in defence of them; each abounding in their *own sense*, and resolutely adhering to their *own construction*, or *interpretation*. And what can give us any light, or what can lead us to the *truth* among the contending parties, but the laying together and considering with all sincerity and impartiality, the *reasons* offered here, or there, respectively? This must be the way to discover what is at length *really scriptural*, and what is *not*: and thus it is that we may be able to distinguish the vain fancies and comments of men, from the true mind and will of God." *Waterland's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 72.

NOTE LII.

"It is the highest act of reason to submit our assent to that testimony that cannot deceive us. It is the next act of reason, to receive that testimony in the most natural sense of the words, wherein it is delivered." *E. Young's Sermons*, vol. ii. p. 85.

NOTE LIII.

"Quorum dissensus fundamentalis est, iisdem Sacris uti nequeunt, sed ab Ecclesiastica illorum communione abstinendum est. Hoc ex ipsa rei natura, et ex ipso etiam mandato divino demonstrari potest. Finis communionis ecclesiasticæ est promotio æternæ animarum salutis, atque glorificationis divinæ: idem etiam cultus publici scopus est. Æterna autem salus quæritur per

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medium liberationis a Deo revelatum; si vero aliquis talia fovet placita, quæ medium hoc, ceu religionis fundamentum, vel directe vel indirecte impugnant et subruunt, ipsam adeoque religionis essentiam non admittunt, amplius ejusdem religionis socius agnosci nequit; et dum hac ratione talia profitetur dogmata, quibus æterna animarum salus obtineri non potest, quæque ad veram Dei glorificationem tendere non possunt, qui tamen et societatis Ecclesiasticæ et cultus publici finis est; Hinc nec communio Ecclesiastica cum illis haberi potest, nec iisdem sacris cum illis uti licet. *Stapferi Inst. Theol. Polem.* vol. i. c. 5. p. 561.

NOTE LIV.

"Fieri vero hæc Dominus permittit et patitur, manente propriæ libertatis arbitrio, ut dum corda et mentes nostras veritatis discrimen examinat, probatorum fides integra, manifesta luce clarescat. Per Apostolum præmonet Spiritus Sanctus et dicit: Oportet et hæreses esse, ut probati manifesti sint in vobis. Sic probantur fideles, sic perfidi deteguntur: sic et ante judicii diem hic quoque jam justorum atque injustorum animæ dividuntur, et a frumento paleæ separantur." *Cyprian. de Unit. Eccles.* Edit. Oxon. p. 111.

NOTE LV.

Speaking of the Docetæ, heretics of his time, who declared the passion of our Saviour to be only a representation, and that he did not really suffer; Ignatius says: Προφυλάσσω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἀνθρωπομόρφων· οὓς οὐ μόνον δεῖ ὑμᾶς μὴ παραδέχεσθαι, ἀλλ' εἰ δυνατὸν ἐστὶ μηδὲ συναντᾶν, μόνον δὲ προσεύχεσθαι ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν, ἐάν πως μετανοήσωσιν, ὅπερ δύσκολον.—τόπος μηδένα φυσιάτω· τὸ γὰρ ὅλον ἐστὶ πίστις καὶ ἀγάπη, ὧν οὐδὲν προκέκριται. Καταμάθετε δὲ τοὺς ἑτεροδοξοῦντας εἰς τὴν χάριν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τὴν εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθοῦσαν, πῶς ἐναντίοι εἰσὶν τῇ γνώμῃ τοῦ Θεοῦ.—Πρέπον ἐν ἐστὶν ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν τοιούτων, καὶ μήτε κατ' ἰδίαν περὶ αὐτῶν λαλεῖν, μήτε κοινῇ· προσέχειν δὲ τοῖς προφήταις, ἐξαιρέτως δὲ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ ἐν ᾧ τὸ πάθος ἡμῖν δεδήλωται, καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις τετελείωται. τοὺς δὲ μερισμοὺς φεύγετε, ὡς ἀρχὴν κακῶν. *Ignatius ad Smyrnæos*, ss. 4, 6, 7. Edit. Pearson.

In the following passage, it is evident that Irenæus

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contemplates heretics as persons who have revolted from the Church, and are no longer fostered in her bosom; as persons therefore, whom, if we would adhere to the Church, we must forsake and avoid, as wanderers from her fold, and corrupters of her doctrine.

"Ubique enim Ecclesiæ prædicat veritatem: et hæc est ἐκτάμυκος lucerna, Christi bajulans lumen. *Qui ergo relinquunt præconium Ecclesiæ*, imperitiam sanctorum presbyterorum arguunt, non contemplantes, quanto pluris sit idiota religiosus a blasphemo et impudente sophista. *Tales sunt autem omnes hæretici*, et qui se plus aliquid præter veritatem invenire putant, sequentes ea quæ prædicta sunt, varie et multiformiter, et imbecille facientes iter, de iisdem non semper easdem sententias habentes, velut cæci a cæcis circumducuntur, juste cadent in sublatentem ignorantiæ foveam, semper quærentes, et nunquam verum invenientes. *Fugere* igitur oportet *sententias ipsorum*, et intentius observare, uti ne vexemur ab ipsis: *confugere autem ad ecclesiam*, et in ejus *sinu* educari, et dominicis scripturis enutriri." *Irenæus advers. Hæres.* lib. v. cap. 20. p. 430. Edit. Grabe.

It was the opinion of Tertullian, that heresy of itself was to be considered as a sufficient proof, that those which were infected by it were not true apostolic churches: while the maintenance of the true faith was of itself sufficient evidence of catholicism, even in those churches, which could neither trace their foundation to the Apostles, nor their immediate successors.

"Ipsa enim doctrina eorum" (hæreticorum nempe) "cum Apostolica comparata, ex diversitate et contrarietate sua pronuntiabit, neque Apostoli alicujus auctoris esse, neque apostolici: quia sicut Apostoli non diversa inter se docuissent, ita et apostolici non contraria Apostolis edidissent. Nisi illi qui ab Apostolis didicerunt, aliter prædicaverunt. Ad hanc itaque formam probabuntur ab illis Ecclesiis quæ licet nullum ex Apostolis vel Apostolicis, auctorem suum proferant, ut multo posteriores, quæ denique quotidie instituuntur: tamen in eadem fide conspirantes, non minus Apostolicæ deputantur pro consanguinitate doctrinæ. Ita omnes hæreses ad utramque formam a nostris Ecclesiis

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provocatæ, probent se quaqua putant Apostolicas. Sed adeo nec sunt: nec probare possunt quod non sunt: nec recipiuntur in pacem et communicationem ab Ecclesiis quoquomodo Apostolicis, scilicet, ob diversitatem sacramenti nullo modo Apostolicæ." *Tertull. de Præscript. Hæret.* p. 213. Edit. Rigalt.

Shortly after he declares, that heretics, inasmuch as they have violated the unity of the faith, are strangers and enemies to the Apostles.

"Unde autem extranei et inimici Apostolis hæretici nisi ex diversitate doctrinæ, quam unusquisque de suo arbitrio, adversus Apostolos aut protulit aut recepit." *Ibid. ut supra*, p. 216.

The testimony of Cyprian is equally decisive. Speaking of an attempt to reconcile the divisions in the Church by fallacious compromises, he says; "Pacem putant esse, quam quidam verbis fallacibus venditant. Non est pax illa, sed bellum: *nec Ecclesiæ jungitur qui ab evangelio separatur.*" *Cyprian. de Lapsis*, p. 128, 129. Edit. Oxon.

NOTE LVI.

This did not escape the penetration of Melancthon; who, though he was ardently desirous of restoring peace and unity to the Church, was fully convinced that such expedients could not, in the nature of things, advance the object of his desire. "Si condentur *articuli flexiloqui*, qui non funditus tollant controversias, sed tantum involvant: hi multo majores dissipationes efficient, quia utraque pars detorquebit eos ad confirmandas suas res, et alii aliter interpretabuntur. Deinde puerile est, et indignum sapientibus viris in Ecclesia, sic ludere ambiguitatibus." *Melancthonis Epistolæ*, p. 8. *ad Nicol. Granvellum.*

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SERMON IV.

NOTE LVII.

"SUB hisce enim symbolis et figuris" (sacramentis gratiæ scilicet) "Dominus clarissime repræsentavit, habere credentes partem singulos suam de iisdem beneficiis gratiæ, et hoc argumento illos validissime obligari ad arctissimum interioris et fraternæ amicitiæ commercium. Ubi enim videmus plures eandem religionis doctrinam profitentes *una* eademque mergi *aqua*, et jam veluti mersos et necatos, emergere rursus, et tanquam ex morte suscitatos ad novam lucem vitamque prodire: quid ea res aliud evidentius ad mentem meam referat, quam credentes ejusdem *mortis* et *vitæ* virtute communionis, quam cum Christo Jesu colunt et profitentur, participes esse? Quando rursus ipsi illi Christianæ professionis homines ad eandem mensam eundem participant *cibum* et *potum*, tanquam vitæ suæ spiritualis symbolica alimenta: quis non mox in hanc veniat cogitationem, illos eandem agnoscere vitæ suæ spiritualis causam, *obedientiam Christi*, et hac ipsa communione, consociari ad mutua sinceræ charitatis officia? Sic utique Paulus omnes in Christum credentes *baptizari* ait εἰς ἓν σῶμα, *in unum corpus*, et *potari* εἰς ἓν Πνεῦμα, *in unum Spiritum*." *Vitringa, Observ. Sac.* lib. v. p. 109.

NOTE LVIII.

"Etsi enim conscientias proprie solus Deus ligat, tamen quatenus vel magistratus, qui Dei minister est, judicat interesse reipublicæ, ut quippiam alioqui per se licitum non fiat: *Vel Ecclesia ordinis et decori, adeoque ædificationis rationem habens, leges aliquas de rebus mediis rite condit:* ejusmodi leges piis *omnino sunt obser-*

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vandæ, et eatenus *conscientias ligant*, ut nemo sciens et prudens rebellandi animo, possit absque peccato vel facere quæ ita prohibentur, vel omittere quæ sic præcipiuntur." *Beza ad peregrin. in Angl. Eccles. Fratres.*

"Of such properties, common unto all societies Christian, it may not be denied that one of the very chiefest is ecclesiastical polity. Which word I therefore the rather use, because the name of government, as commonly men understand it in ordinary speech, doth not comprise the largeness of that whereunto in this question it is applied. For when we speak of government, what doth the greatest part conceive thereby, but only the exercise of superiority peculiar unto rulers and guides of others? To our purpose therefore the name of Church polity will better serve, because it containeth both government, and also whatsoever besides belongeth *to the ordering of the Church in public*. Neither is there any thing in this degree more necessary than Church polity, which is a *form of ordering the public spiritual affairs of the Church of God*." *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. i. book 8. p. 359. Edit. Oxon.

NOTE LIX.

"Unto laws thus made and received by a whole Church, they which live within the bosom of that Church must not think it a matter indifferent either to yield or not to yield obedience. Is it a small offence to despise the Church of God? *My son, keep thy father's commandments*, says Solomon, *and forget not thy mother's instruction; bind them both always about thine heart*. It doth not stand with the duty we owe to our heavenly Father, that to the ordinances of our mother the Church we should shew ourselves disobedient. Let us not say we keep the commandments of the one, when we break the law of the other: for unless we observe both, we obey neither. And what doth lett, but that we may observe both, when they are not the one to the other in any sort repugnant? For of such laws only we speak, as being made in form and manner already declared, can have in them no contradiction unto the laws of Almighty God. Yea, that which is more, the laws thus made, God himself doth in such sort au-

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thorize, that to despise them, is to despise in them him." *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. i. b. 3. p. 392. Edit. Oxon.

NOTE LX.

"If men break the bond of unity, whereby the body of the Church is coupled and knit in one, *as they do which wilfully forsake all external communion with saints in holy exercises, purely and orderly established in the Church*, this is to separate themselves by schism." *Hooker's first Sermon on Jude; Works*, vol. iii. p. 554.

NOTE LXI.

"Cujuslibet civis" (Ecclesiæ scilicet, aut civitatis Dei) "officium est cum aliis commune societatis bonum *unitis viribus* promovere. Id autem fit, quando communionem suam cum reliquis testatur dum ea observat officia, quæ ad finem societatis obtinendum tendunt. Communio illa non nisi publice reliquis societatis membris indicari potest, et cum bonum publicum etiam conjunctis viribus promovendum sit; etiam id fieri debet in societate reliquorum, hoc est *publice*.

Actiones, quas conjunctim cum reliquis civitatis Dei membris ex intuitu finis societatis ad promotionem communis æternæ salutis, glorificationis divinæ, decoris civitatis et tranquillitatis publicæ, in cœtu Ecclesiæ suspicimus, vocantur CULTUS PUBLICUS. *Stapfer. Inst. Theol. Polem.* vol. i. cap. 3. p. 428.

NOTE LXII.

The following passage of Stapfer sets forth perspicuously the objects of public worship; all of which may be reduced under the two heads I have mentioned; and each, in itself, may furnish an argument in favour of "forms of prayer," as the most effectual mode which can be adopted for its accomplishment.

"Ad promovendam communem animarum salutem, publicamque fidei professionem opus est Verbi Dei inculcatione, precibus, et certis ritibus; ad publicam Dei glorificationem faciunt preces, cantus, et beneficiorum maximorum testificatio; ad tranquillitatem conser-

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vandam in civitate Dei opus est deprecatione culpæ, petitione omnium bonorum spiritualium; et quantum ad gloriam Dei facit, temporalium, intercessione pro iis qui extra et intra Ecclesiæ societatem versantur et gratiarum actione; ad decus externum civitatis non minimum facit ordo. *Stapfer. Inst. Theol. Polem.* vol. i. cap. 3. p. 429.

NOTE LXIII.

"Quando ergo in præceptis suis ponit et dicit: Ubi fuerint duo aut tres collecti in nomine meo, ego cum eis sum: non homines ab Ecclesia dividit, qui instituit ac fecit ecclesiam; sed exprobans discordiam perfidis, et fidelibus pacem sua voce commendans, ostendit magis se esse cum duobus aut tribus unanimiter orantibus, quam cum dissidentibus plurimis; plusque impetrari posse paucorum concordi prece, quam discordiosa oratione multorum." *Cyprian. de Unit. Eccles.* Edit. Oxon. p. 113.

NOTE LXIV.

"If a man come into a congregation, where the minister is left to pray as he pleases, he cannot immediately join with him in prayer, unless he have an implicite, that is, a foolish faith and confidence in the person that prays. He cannot reasonably direct his devotion immediately to God, but must first take time to hearken and consider whether the prayer of the minister be such as he may safely and heartily join in; which great inconvenience is taken away by forms of prayer, prepared and provided beforehand by the wisdom of the Church." *Bull's Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 561.

NOTE LXV.

"That the altar here signifies the sacrifice offered upon the altar, is plain from this, that of this altar they were to eat. So they that ate of the Jewish sacrifices are said to be κοινωνοὶ θυσιαστηρίου, partakers of the altar, (1 Cor. x. 18.) i. e. of the things offered at the altar; and then it must import, the body of our Lord offered and broken on the cross; by partaking the memorials of which body, we testifie our communion with Christ and

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his Church, (1 Cor. v. 16, 17.) and of this, saith the Apostle, they have not right to partake who adhere still to the Mosaical oblations." *Whitby, Comment. ad loc. citat.* "Θυσιαστηρίου voce μετωνυμικῶς cultus significatur (vide 1 Cor. ix. 3.) erat enim in cultu Judaico præcipua pars illa, quæ circa altare victimarum versabatur." *Hug. Grotii Annot. in Epist. ad Hebræos.*

NOTE LXVI.

Bishop Bull has an observation upon the composition of the Lord's Prayer, which is well worthy the consideration of those, who hastily reject the established formularies of the Church; and are willing to substitute for them the crude conceptions of an extemporaneous composition. "It is very observable," says he, "that our Lord Christ himself, when he recommended to his Disciples upon their desire a prayer to be used by them, (that which we call the Lord's Prayer,) he did not frame an entirely new prayer, in words of his own conception, but took out of the ancient *euchologies*, or prayer books of the Jews, what was good and laudable in them, and out of them composed that prayer. The very preface of the Lord's Prayer, *Our Father which art in heaven*, was the usual preface of the Jewish prayers. And all the following *petitions* are to be found, almost in the very same words, in their prayer books. He that doubts of this, if he understands the learned languages, may be satisfied by consulting Drusius and Capellus, in their notes upon the sixth chapter of St. Matthew, the ninth and following verses. And the reflection of the learned Grotius upon this is very remarkable: so far was the Lord himself of the Christian Church from all affectation of unnecessary novelty. Our Saviour in this instance hath plainly shewn us, what respect we ought to have for forms of prayer anciently received and approved by the Church of God." *Bull's Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 556.

NOTE LXVII.

It may however be added, that, though this is the case, there are several strong passages in the writings of St. Paul, which seem to bear reference to the ap-

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pointment of a form of prayer, and have been so understood by interpreters of great authority. Bishop Bull has the following remark upon 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. "To this public person, to this great Bishop of the Church, is this charge given by St. Paul in my text: 'I exhort therefore that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,' &c. He was to take care, that such prayers should be made in all churches and congregations under his inspection and jurisdiction. And how could he do this, but by providing, by his authority, that there should be set forms of prayer, framed according to this rule given him by the Apostle, to be used in the churches? Sure I am, the primitive Catholic Church understood this to be the meaning of the Apostle. Hence in all the churches of Christ over the world, however distant from each other, we find set forms of public prayers, suited and conform to this direction of the Apostle. This was observed by the ancient author of the book *concerning the calling* of the Gentiles, attributed to Prosper, who occasionally citing the words of my text, hath this note upon it. 'This law and rule of prayer hath been so religiously and unanimously observed by all Christian priests and people, that there is no part or quarter of the world, wherein there are not forms of prayer, suited and agreeable to this pattern.'" *Bishop Bull's Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 547.

NOTE LXVIII.

"Because," says Hammond on this chapter, "every one had his several psalm, it is therefore reprehended by the Apostle, as tending to *confusion;* and by that consequence, St. Paul's judgement is thence deducible for the joyning of all in the same form, as being the only course tending to *edification*, in the end of that verse: and then sure 'twould be hard, that that which the Apostle conceived the only course for *edifying*, should now be *necessary* to be turned out of the Church, as *contrary* to *edification*." *Hammond's Works*, vol. i. p. 139. *View of the New Directory.*

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NOTE LXIX.

St. Paul also, on this occasion, appeals to the practice of all other Christian churches for confirmation of his directions: hence giving us to understand, that in every one of them was then established such a prescribed form of devotion, as was calculated to prevent all unseemly confusion in their public services. Thus, as the learned Grotius well observes, "Duabus securibus disputationes amputat, instituto apostolico, et consuetudine Ecclesiarum. Quod per omnes Ecclesias receptum est, disputando velle in controversiam vocare, est φιλονείκων." *Grotii Annot. in Epist. ad Corinth.*

NOTE LXX.

The following passage, in the second Apology of Justin Martyr, written and published about the middle of the second century, describes the public devotions of the Church at that early period. Every unprejudiced reader of the Martyr's words will, it is presumed, be convinced, that some prescribed form of prayer was then in use. The attempt to establish a different hypothesis upon the expression ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ, has been already so well exposed, (vide London Cases, vol. ii. p. 195, and the authorities there quoted,) that it is unnecessary to enter into the question. The reader will also perceive, that, in the commencement of this passage, one form of thanksgiving (the doxology) now in use among us is particularly alluded to. This, we are told, was then generally adopted; and it is also to be found in every ancient liturgy yet remaining. "This form, therefore," says Bp. Bull, as well as others which he specifies, "cannot reasonably be thought to have any other original than apostolic order and appointment, delivered to the several nations and people, together with the first preaching and plantation of Christianity among them." *Discourses*, vol. ii. p. 549.

Ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τε οἷς προσφερόμεθα, εὐλογοῦμεν τὸν ποιητὴν τῶν πάντων διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ διὰ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου· καὶ τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένῃ ἡμέρᾳ πάντων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγροὺς μενόντων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλευσις γίνεται, καὶ τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν

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ἀναγινώσκεται μέχρις ἐγχωρεῖ. εἶτα παυσαμένου τοῦ ἀναγινώσκοντος, ὁ προεστὼς διὰ λόγου τὴν νουθεσίαν καὶ πρόκλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται· ἔπειτα ἀνιστάμεθα κοινῇ πάντες, καὶ εὐχὰς πέμπομεν· καὶ ὡς προέφημεν, παυσαμένων ἡμῶν τῆς εὐχῆς, ἄρτος προσφέρεται, καὶ οἶνος καὶ ὕδωρ· καὶ ὁ προεστὼς εὐχὰς ὁμοίως καὶ εὐχαριστίας ὅση δύναμις αὐτῷ ἀναπέμπει, καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐπευφημεῖ λέγων τὸ ἀμήν. *Justini Martyris Apol.* ii. p. 98. Edit. Paris, 1615.

The very passage which has been cited from Tertullian, to prove that forms of prayer were *not* in use in his time, seems rather to testify in their favour. He declares, in his Apology, that the Christians in their public assemblies constantly prayed for the emperors. "Oramus pro omnibus imperatoribus, vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum, et quæcunque hominis et Cæsaris vota sunt." And he subjoins, that they did so, because in the Word of God it was enjoined them so to do. "Orate, inquit, pro regibus, et pro principibus, et potestatibus, ut omnia tranquilla sint vobis." Thus referring to that direction of St. Paul, which, as we have before seen, was judged by the universal Church in the primitive days to direct the use of forms of prayer. (Vide Note LXVII.) He adds, indeed, describing the manner in which these prescribed petitions were addressed to God, "Oramus Christiani manibus expansis, quia innocuis; capite nudo, quia non erubescimus; denique *sine monitore, quia de pectore.*" And upon this last expression, the opponents of forms of prayer have rested; as if it contained a proof, that the petitions of Christians were then the extemporaneous effusions of their own hearts, uttered without any person to direct them, as to the form of words in which they were to pray. But, without adverting to the impropriety of endeavouring to set aside the positive and concurrent testimony of all antiquity, by a forced interpretation of one obscure passage, the words themselves may surely receive an interpretation, much more natural in itself, and agreeable to the tenour of the Apologist's argument, as well as to the testimony of other writers of equal authority on the same subject. When he says, "we pray from our

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hearts;" we may surely understand him to mean, we pray with sincerity. And as it is his great object to prove, that nothing in the Christian religion made its professors bad subjects of the emperors; nay rather, that it enforced the duties of peaceable and loyal submission to established authority, we may well imagine that he would be anxious to impress its opponents with a belief, that they were sincere and hearty in their prayers for their heathen governors. For the same reason he may have added, "sine monitore oramus," we pray without any one to admonish us to repeat the words after the priest. Such an officer, we are told by Pliny, was appointed to direct and superintend the utterance of the heathens; "Nequid verborum prætermittatur, aut præposterum dicatur." But such an officer, we may suppose Tertullian to say, is not required to direct our devotions; not because we pray without a priest to dictate our prayers to us, but because we pray *heartily;* we are not repeating our prayers by rote, as mere formalists, as if we had no concern in them; but we are *earnest* in our desire to obtain their object, and therefore attentive to the words we are accustomed to use. Sse the discussion of this passage, *London Cases*, vol. ii. p. 196. They who may object to this interpretation, should consider, that, by the admission, in its full force, of the objection here founded upon them by the opponents of forms of prayer, they would prove rather more than they perhaps intend. For if they suppose Tertullian to mean, that the Christians in his day prayed "without any one to dictate or prescribe a form of words to them;" they must deny them not only a liturgy, but a minister also: "for in their ordinary public prayers, their minister was the mouth of the congregation, and whether he prayed by form or extempore, his words were a form of words to them, in which they were obliged to frame and express their devotions; so that either this phrase, *without a monitor*, must import, that they had none to dictate and minister to them in their public prayers, or it cannot import that they had no public forms to pray by; because if they had any to dictate to them, his extempore prayers would have been as much a monitor to direct them

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what words to pray in, as if it had been a stated form of liturgy." *Vide London Cases, ut supra,* In other parts of Tertullian's writings, allusions to different forms, used in the public service of the Church, may be found. In his Apology he speaks of "their meetings before daybreak, to sing hymns to Christ, as God:" "Cœtus antelucanos ad canendum Christo ut Deo." In another work (*de Resurrect. Carnis*) he expressly refers to the form of examination used at baptism; and declares that "the soul is not consecrated by the washing, but by the answer." "Anima non lavatione, sed responsione sancitur." What this answer was, we are informed by him in another treatise; and we find it to have been, in substance, the same renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh, which our own Church at this day requires from all who come to be baptized. "Aquam adituri, ibidem, sed et aliquanto prius in Ecclesia sub antistitis manu contestamur, nos renuntiare diabolo, et pompæ et angelis ejus." *De Corona,* c. 3. The fact therefore, that forms of prayer were in early use among Christians, may now, I trust, be fairly said to be traced in the writings of Tertullian. Origen also mentions the *appointed prayers* which Christians continually used, Ταῖς προσταχθείσαις εὐχαῖς συνεχέστερον καὶ δεόντως νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας χρώμενοι. *Contra Celsum,* lib. 6. Edit. Spenceri Cantab. 1658. p. 302. And speaking of the form used in administering the sacrament of baptism, he says; "Who can easily explain the reason of some words, and gestures, and orders, and interrogations, and answers that are used in baptism? which yet we observe and fulfil, according as we first took them up, they being delivered to us by tradition from our great High Priest, or his disciples." *In Numer. Homil.* 5.

I have already had occasion to advert to the stress which Cyprian lays upon the efficacy of public and common prayer. (Vide Note LXIII.) The following passage will perhaps still farther illustrate the sentiments of this holy Father upon this subject. Speaking of the Lord's Prayer he says; "Ante omnia pacis doctor atque unitatis magister, singillatim noluit et privatim precem fieri, ut quis cum precatur, pro se tantum precetur.

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Non enim dicimus, Pater meus qui es in cœlis; nec panem meum da mihi hodie; nec dimitti sibi tantum unusquisque debitum postulat; aut ut in tentationem non inducatur, atque a malo liberetur pro se solo rogat. *Publica est nobis et communis oratio:* et quando oramus, non pro uno, sed pro toto populo oramus, quia totus populus unum sumus." *Cyprian. de Orat. Domin.* Edit. Oxon. p. 141.

Bringing forward the example of the Apostles, as a model for the imitation of Christians, he says; "Perseverabant in oratione *unanimes;* orationes suæ et instantiam simul et *concordiam* declarantes. Quia Deus, qui inhabitare facit unanimes in domo, non admittit in divinam et æternam domum, nisi eos apud quos est *unanimis oratio.*" *Ibid.* p. 142. It may be inferred from this strong language, that Cyprian knew of no other mode of public worship than by a prescribed form, or he would not have insisted upon an unanimity, scarcely attainable by any other means. And this inference is fully justified by his own language in this very treatise, where, adverting to the usage of the Church, he mentions one prescribed form, which has been handed down to us, and is yet preserved in our own liturgy. "Sacerdos ante orationem præfatione præmissa, parat fratrum mentes dicendo: 'Sursum corda;' ut dum respondet plebs: 'Habemus ad Dominum,' admoneatur nihil aliud se quam Dominum cogitare debere." "The priest in the preface before the prayers prepares the minds of the brethren by saying, 'Lift up your hearts;' that when the people answer, 'We lift them up unto the Lord;' they may be reminded that they ought to think of nothing but the Lord." *De Orat. Domin.* p. 152. In his seventieth Epistle, Cyprian also speaks of the questions asked in baptism, in a manner which shews that the form at present used in our Church is modelled upon that of his age. If it should be objected to all citations from the records preserved of this baptismal examination, that this is no form of prayer; it may be replied, that "it is a limiting the minister from exercising his own gift in performing his ministerial office: and if in performing, he might be limited to a form of question, why not to a form of prayer? And if the

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Church thought not fit to leave him at liberty to question extempore in baptism; it is very improbable that it should leave him at liberty to pray extempore in public; there being as great a necessity to prescribe him a form for the latter, as for the former. And that *de facto* there were forms of prayer, as well as of question and answer used in baptism, is not only affirmed in the Constitutions of St. Clemens," (see the next Note,) "but some of the prayers are there inserted." *London Cases*, vol. ii. p. 206. For further information on this interesting subject, the reader may be referred to Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, book 5; Bull's Sermons; and the London Cases, as cited above; the Homily on Common Prayer; Brett's Ancient Liturgies; Bingham's Antiquities, book xiii. cap. 5. where he will find the historical evidence fully drawn out.

NOTE LXXI.

The most ancient liturgy is that to be found in the Apostolical Constitutions, and therefore called the Clementine liturgy, because these Constitutions have been attributed to St. Clement. That these Constitutions were not compiled or collected by him, or at the command of the Apostles, and that they have been much interpolated, is now generally agreed among the learned. But it is admitted, that the collection was certainly made before the Council of Nice; that is, in less than two hundred years after the death of St. John; and it cannot be doubted, that, whatever the author has therein set down as constituted by the Apostles, was an immemorial custom when he wrote; for had it been otherwise, it would have been as easy to detect his falsehood, as it would now be to trace the origin of any custom or practice introduced into the English Church, since the period of the Reformation.

The authority therefore of these Constitutions may be relied upon, wherever contemporary evidence, that is, evidence older than the Council of Nice, can be produced, to prove that the passage, on which we depend, is not an interpolation by some more modern writer. (See Brett's Liturgies.) Dr. Brett has shewn the existence of such evidence in favour of every part of the

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communion office, contained in the eighth book of the Apostolic Constitutions, and there called Διάταξις Ἰακώβου τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ Ἰωάννου τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου, the constitution of James, the brother of John, the son of Zebedee. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis or Constantia in Cyprus, A. D. 368, bears frequent testimony to the Apostolic Constitutions: and Cotelerius observes, that in one place he gives them this character; that they contain all canonical order, and nothing contrary to the faith, or confession, or the administration and rules of the Church; which no man could say, who did not approve of the several forms of worship to be found in them." *Bingham's Eccles. Ant.* lib. xiii. cap. 5. The antiquity of this liturgy may therefore be considered as sufficiently established; and we have just grounds for believing it to be a fair representation of the forms used in the Church from the apostolic age. One writer indeed hesitates not to affirm, that he is in his own mind persuaded, that "if we had the very words in which St. Peter and St. Paul consecrated the eucharist, it would not differ in substance from that, which is contained in this ancient liturgy." *Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice*, part 2. And the learned Dr. George Hickes asserts, that "the eucharistical office in the Apostolical Constitutions is the standard and test by which all the others are to be tried. And by comparing those with this, the innovations and additions in after times, be they good or bad, will appear." *Christian Priesthood*, vol. i. p. 141. Consult Cotelerii Judicium de Constit. Apost.; Beveridge in Cod. Can. Eccles. Prim.; Bingham's Eccles. Antiq.; Brett's Ancient Liturgies; Cave's Primitive Christianity; Bull's Discourses, vol. ii.; Hammond's Works, vol. i.—"View of the New Directory."

NOTE LXXII.

"Of all helps for due performance of this service, the greatest is that very set and standing order itself, which, framed with common advice, hath both for matter and form prescribed whatsoever is herein publicly done. No doubt, from God it has proceeded, and by us it must be acknowledged a work of singular care

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and providence, that the Church hath evermore held a prescript form of common prayer, although not in all things every where the same, yet for the most part retaining still the same analogy. So that if the liturgies of all ancient churches throughout the world be compared amongst themselves, it may be easily perceived that they had all one original mould, and that the public prayer of the people of God in churches thoroughly settled, did never use to be voluntary dictates, proceeding from any man's extemporal wit.

"To him which considereth the grievous and scandalous inconveniences, whereunto they make themselves daily subject, with whom any blind and secret corner is judged a fit house of common prayer; the manifold confusions which they fall into, where every man's private spirit and gift (as they term it) is the only bishop that ordaineth him to his ministry; the irksome deformities whereby through endless and senseless effusions of indigested prayers, they oftentimes disgrace in most insufferable manner the worthiest part of Christian duty towards God, who herein are subject to no certain order, but pray both what and how they list; to him, I say, which weigheth duly all these things, the reasons cannot be obscure, why God doth in public prayer so much respect the solemnity of places where, the authority and calling of persons by whom, and the precise appointment even with what words or sentences, his name should be called on amongst his people." *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity*, vol. ii. book 5. p. 106.

NOTE LXXIII.

"Si duobus inquit (Dominus) ex vobis convenerit in terra: unanimitatem prius posuit; concordiam pacis ante præmisit; ut conveniat nobis, fideliter ac firmiter docuit. Quomodo autem potest ei cum aliquo convenire; cui cum corpore ipsius Ecclesiæ et cum universa fraternitate non convenit? Quomodo possunt duo aut tres in nomine Christi colligi, quos constat a Christo et ab ejus evangelio separari? Non enim nos ab illis, sed illi a nobis recesserunt. Et dum *hæreses et schismata postmodum nata sunt* dum *conventicula sibi diversa constituunt*, veritatis caput atque originem reliquerunt,

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Dominus autem de Ecclesia sua loquitur, et ad hos qui sunt in Ecclesia loquitur; ut si *ipsi concordes fuerint*, si secundum quod mandavit et monuit, duo aut tres licet, collecti *unanimiter oraverint;* duo aut tres licet sint, impetrare possint de Dei magistate quod postulant." *Cyprian. de Unit. Eccl.* Edit. Oxon. p. 112.

NOTE LXXIV.

On this subject the Fathers were accustomed to use very strong language. Σπουδάζετε οὖν μιᾷ εὐχαριστίᾳ χρῆσθαι. Μία γὰρ σὰρξ τοῦ Κυριοῦ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἓν ποτήριον εἰς ἕνωσιν τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ. *Ignatius ad Philadelph.* sect. 4. "Quanto dignius," says Tertullian, "fratres et dicuntur, et habentur, qui unum Patrem Deum agnoverunt, qui *unum spiritum biberunt sanctitatis*, qui de uno utero ignorantiæ ejusdem ad unam lucem expaverunt veritatis?" *Apologeticus*, s. 39. Cyprian often adverts to it. "Pacificos enim et concordes atque unanimes esse in domo sua Deus præcipit: et quales nos fecit secunda nativitate, tales vult renatos perseverare; ut qui filii Dei esse cœpimus, in Dei pace maneamus; et quibus Spiritus unus est, unus sit et animus et sensus." *De Orat. Dom.* p. 149. "Denique unanimitatem Christianam firma sibi atque inseparabili caritate connexam, etiam ipsa dominica sacrificia declarant. Nam quando Dominus corpus suum panem vocat de multorum granorum adunatione congestum; populum nostrum quem portabat, indicat adunatum: et quando sanguinem suum vinum appellat, de botris atque acinis plurimis expressum atque in unum coactum; gregem item nostrum significat commixtione adunatæ multitudinis copulatum." *Epist.* lxix. p. 182. Chrysostom puts this question, Τί γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ ποιοῦν τὴν ἀδελφότητα; τὸν λουτρὸν τῆς παλιγγενεσίας, τὸ δυνηθῆναι καλέσαι πατέρα τὸν Θεόν. *Homil. ad Hebræos.* c. xi. tom. 9. p. 1917. Edit. Commelin.

NOTE LXXV.

"As we are not naturally men without birth, so neither are we Christian men, in the eyes of the Church of God, but by new birth; nor according to the manifest ordinary course of divine dispensation new born, but by

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that baptism, which both declareth and maketh us Christians." *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity,* vol. ii. b. 5. p. 248.

NOTE LXXVI.

"If Christ himself," says the temperate and judicious Hooker, "which giveth salvation, do require baptism; it is not for us that look for salvation to sound and examine him, whether unbaptized men may be saved; but seriously to do that which is required, and religiously to fear the danger which may grow by the want thereof. Had Christ only declared his will to have all men baptized, and not acquainted us with any cause why baptism is necessary, our ignorance in the reason of that he enjoineth, might perhaps have hindered somewhat the forwardness of our obedience thereunto; whereas now, being taught that baptism is necessary to take away sin, how have we the fear of God in our hearts, if care of delivering men's souls from sin do not move us to use all means for their baptism?" To this he subjoins the following remarks. "The law of Christ, which in these considerations maketh baptism necessary, must be construed and understood according to rules of natural equity." And again; "Grace is not absolutely tied to sacraments; and besides such is the lenity of God, that unto things altogether impossible he bindeth no man; but when we cannot do what is enjoined us, accepteth our will to do, instead of the deed itself." *Ecclesiastical Polity,* b. v. s. 60.

NOTE LXXVII.

Upon this subject the testimony of Justin Martyr is direct and positive. Καὶ ἡ τροφὴ αὕτη καλεῖται παρ' ἡμῖν εὐχαριστία· ἧς οὐδενὶ ἄλλῳ μετασχεῖν ἐξόν ἐστιν, ἢ τῷ πιστεύοντι ἀληθῆ εἶναι τὰ δεδιδαγμένα ὑφ' ἡμῶν, καὶ λουσαμένῳ τὸ ὑπὲρ ἀφέσεως ἁμαρτίων καὶ εἰς ἀναγέννησιν λουτρὸν, καὶ οὕτως βιοῦντι ὡς ὁ Χριστὸς παρέδωκεν. οὐ γὰρ ὡς κοινὸν ἄρτον, οὐδὲ κοινὸν πόμα ταῦτα λαμβάνομεν· ἀλλ' ὃν τρόπον διὰ λόγου Θεοῦ σαρκοποιηθεὶς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ Σωτὴρ ἡμῶν, καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ὑπὲρ σωτηρίας ἡμῶν ἔσχεν, οὕτως καὶ τὴν δι' εὐχῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ εὐχαριστηθεῖσαν τροφὴν, ἐξ ἧς αἷμα καὶ σάρκες

κατὰ μεταβολὴν τρέφονται ἡμῶν, ἐκείνου τοῦ σαρκοποιηθέντος Ἰησοῦ καὶ σάρκα καὶ αἷμα ἐδιδάχθημεν εἶναι. *Justini Martyris Apol.* ii. p. 97. Edit. Paris.

Tertullian also, defending Christians from the monstrous accusations brought against them by their heathen persecutors, as persons whose mysteries were marked by the most horrid crimes; by infanticide, and gross obscenity; appeals to the secrecy observed at the celebration of the higher mysteries of the Christian religion, for proof of the absurdity of the charge. "Si semper latemus, quando proditum est quod admittimus? Imo a quibus prodi potuit? Ab ipsis enim reis. Non utique; cum vel ex forma omnibus mysteriis silentii fides debeatur. Samothracia et Eleusinia reticentur. Quanto magis talia, quæ prodita interim etiam humanam animadversionem provocabunt, dum divina servatur? Si ergo non ipsi proditores sui, sequitur ut extranei. Et *unde extraneis notitia?* cum semper etiam piæ initiationes *arceant profanos*, et *arbitris caveant* nisi si impii minus metuunt." *Apologet.* c. vii. p. 8. Edit. Rigalt. The form also of administering the eucharist preserved in the Clementine liturgy, commences with this warning to all, who were not qualified to join in this solemn service, to depart; Εὐθὺς ὁ διάκονος λέγῃ· μή τις τῶν κατηχουμένων. μή τις τῶν ἀκροωμένων. μή τις τῶν ἀπίστων. μή τις τῶν ἑτεροδόξων. Whence we learn, that the former part of the service was open to all who chose to partake in it; not only to the catechumens, those who were under that previous course of discipline and instruction required of the candidates for baptism; but even to heretics and unbelievers. But that none of these were permitted even to be present at the consecration of the eucharist. *Vid. Apost. Const.* lib. viii. cap. 12. Edit. Cotel.

NOTE LXXVIII.

For a full account of the discipline of the primitive Church, and the difference between the lesser and greater excommunication, the reader is referred to Bingham's Ecclesiastical Antiquities, vol. ii. b. 16. c. 2. folio. London, 1727.

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NOTE LXXIX.

I trust it will not be supposed, that I would lessen the reverential regard, which these holy mysteries demand from every Christian; or undervalue the necessity of a serious and careful preparation for partaking in them. But every clergyman finds reason to regret the effect, which an excessive alarm, excited perhaps by the strong language of some well intended treatises on the work of preparation, has produced on the minds of many pious persons, especially among the lower and uneducated classes. This effect he will often find it impossible to remove, either by public exhortation, or by private admonition: and its consequences he will lament to witness, in the systematic non-attendance of many, whom he has reason to suppose, in every other respect, sincere and zealous in the discharge of their duty. On this very serious subject, the following observations of Waterland are well worthy consideration. "Since it is allowed on all hands, that there can be no just bar to *frequency* of communion, but the *want of preparation*, which is only such a bar, as men may themselves remove if they please; it concerns them highly to take off the impediment, as soon as possible, and not to trust to vain hopes of alleviating one fault by another. It was required under the law, that a man should come *holy* and *clean* and well *prepared* to the *passover:* but yet his neglecting to be *clean* (when he might be clean) was never allowed as a just apology for his staying away. No: the absenting, in that case, was an offence great enough to deserve the being *cut off* from God's people; because it amounted to a disesteeming, and, in effect, dishonouring God's *covenant*. The *danger* of misperforming any religious duty is an argument for *fear* and *caution*, but no excuse for *neglect:* God insists upon the *doing* it, and the doing it *well* also. The proper duty of the high priest, under the law, was very *dangerous* employ, requiring the exactest *care* and profoundest *reverence:* nevertheless, there was no declining the service, neither was the *exactness* of the preparation, or qualifications, any proper excuse to be pleaded for non-performance. It was no

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sufficient plea for the *slothful* servant, under the Gospel, that he thought his master hard to please, and therefore neglected his bounden duty: for the use he ought to have made of that thought, was, to have been so much the more wakeful and diligent in his master's service. Therefore in the case of the *holy communion*, it is to very little purpose to plead the strictness of the *self-examination*, or *preparation*, by way of excuse either for a *total*, or for a *frequent;* or for a *long* neglect of it. A man may say, that he comes not to the table, because he is *not prepared*, and so far he assigns a *good* reason: but if he should be further asked, why was he not *prepared*, when he might; there he can only make some trifling insufficient excuse, or remain speechless." *Waterland on the Eucharist*, ch. xiv. p. 565.

NOTE LXXX.

"Unto Christian assemblies there are most special promises made. St. Paul, though likely to prevail with God as much as any one, did notwithstanding think it much more, both for God's glory and his own good, if prayers might be made and thanks yielded in his behalf by a number of men. The prince and people of Nineveh assembling themselves as a main army of supplicants, it was not in the power of God to withstand them. I speak no otherwise concerning the force of public prayer in the Church of God, than before me Tertullian hath done, *We come by troops to the place of assembly, that being bonded as it were together*, we may be supplicants enough to besiege God with our prayers: these voices are unto him acceptable." *Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity*, b. v. s. 24. He quotes also the following strong assertion of St. Ambrose. "Multi minimi, dum congregantur unanimes, sunt magni: et multorum preces impossibile est contemni." *De Pœn.* "A harmony of confessions," says Bp. Womacke, "ring a loud peale in the eares of men, and a sweete one in the eares of God: when all the devotions of a whole kingdom are twisted into one *cable*, it must needs be *strong*, and almost invincible with the Almighty." *Beaten Oile for the Lamps of the Sanctuarie, by L. Womacke*, 4to. 1641. p. 10.

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SERMON V.

NOTE LXXXI.

THE language of the Fathers upon this subject; their earnest exhortations to Christians, to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; prove that they were fully aware of the dangers to be apprehended from the dissensions, which even then had broken out among them. To the Magnesians Ignatius writes thus; Πάντες ἓν ὁμοήθειαν Θεοῦ λαβόντες, ἐντρέπεσθε ἀλλήλοις, καὶ μηδεὶς κατὰ σάρκα βλεπέτω τὸν πλησίον, ἀλλ' ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἀλλήλους διαπαντὸς ἀγαπᾶτε. Μηδὲν ἔχω ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ δυνήσεταί ὑμᾶς μερίσαι, ἀλλ' ἑνώθητε τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, καὶ τοῖς προκαθημένοις, εἰς τύπον καὶ διδαχὴν ἀφθαρσίας. Ὥσπερ οὖν ὁ κύριος ἄνευ τοῦ πατρὸς οὐδὲν ἐποίησεν, ἡνωμένος ὢν, ἔτε δι' ἑαυτοῦ, ἔτε διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, οὕτως μηδὲ ὑμεῖς ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, μηδὲν πράσσετε. μηδὲ πειράσητε εὔλογόν τι φαίνεσθαι ἰδίᾳ ὑμῖν· ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ μία προσευχὴ, μία δέησις, εἷς νοῦς, μία ἐλπὶς, ἐν ἀγάπῃ, ἐν τῇ χαρᾷ τῇ ἀμώμῳ. Εἷς ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς, οὗ ἄμεινον οὐδέν ἐστιν. πάντες ὡς εἰς ναὸν συντρέχετε Θεοῦ, ὡς ἐπὶ ἓν θυσιαστήριον, ὡς ἐπὶ ἕνα Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν ἀφ' ἑνὸς πατρὸς προελθόντα, καὶ εἰς ἕνα ὄντα καὶ χωρήσαντα. *Ad Magnesios Epist.* ss. 6, 7. To the Philadelphians he says, Ἐκραύγασα μεταξὺ ὤν, ἐλάλουν μεγάλῃ φωνῇ· τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε, καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, καὶ διακόνοις. Οἱ δὲ ὑποπτεύσαντές με, ὡς προειδότα τὸν μερισμόν τινων, λέγειν ταῦτα, μάρτυς δέ μοι ἐν ᾧ δέδεμαι, ὅτι ἀπὸ σαρκὸς ἀνθρωπίνης οὐκ ἔγνων. Τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ἐκήρυσσεν, λέγων τάδε· χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε· τὴν σάρκα ὑμῶν ὡς ναὸν Θεοῦ τηρεῖτε· τὴν ἕνωσιν ἀγαπᾶτε· τὰς μερισμοὺς φεύγετε· μιμηταὶ γίνεσθε Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ. *Ad Philadelph. Epist.* s. 7. Irenæus thus denounces the schismatics of his days, as obnoxious to divine wrath and vengeance. Ἀναχρινεῖ δὲ (καὶ) τοὺς τὰ σχίσματα ἐργαζομένους, κενοὺς ὄντας

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τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀγάπης, καὶ τὸ ἴδιον λυσιτελὲς σκοποῦντας, ἀλλὰ μὴ τὴν ἕνωσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας· καὶ διὰ μικρὰς καὶ τὰς ὑψούσας αἰτίας τὸ μέγα καὶ ἔνδοξον σῶμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ τέμνοντας καὶ διαιροῦντας, ἢ ὅσον τὸ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ἀναιροῦντας. *Adv. Hæres.* l. iv. c. 62. As Irenæus ranks the dividers of the Church with the murderers of our Saviour, so Cyprian declares that the sin of such persons is one which martyrdom itself will not cleanse: such a person, says he, may be slain, but he cannot be crowned. "Inexpiabilis et gravis culpa discordiæ, nec passione purgatur. Esse martyr non potest, qui in Ecclesia non est: ad regnum pervenire non poterit, qui eam, quæ regnatura est, derelinquit. Pacem nobis Christus dedit: concordes atque unanimes esse præcepit: dilectionis et charitatis fœdera incorrupta atque inviolata servari mandavit: exhibere se non potest martyrem, qui fraternam non tenuit charitatem. Docet hoc et contestatur Paulus dicens: et si habuero fidem ita ut montes transferam, charitatem autem non habeam, nihil sum. Et si in cibos pauperum distribuero omnia mea, et si tradidero corpus meum ut ardeam, charitatem autem non habeam, nihil proficio."—"Cum Deo manere non possunt, qui esse in Ecclesia Dei unanimes noluerunt; ardeant licet flammis et ignibus traditi, vel objecti bestiis animas suas ponant; non erit illa fidei corona, sed pœna perfidiæ; nec religiosæ virtutis exitus gloriosus, sed desperationis interitus. Occidi talis potest; coronari non potest." *Cyprian. de Unit. Eccles.* Edit. Oxon. p. 113, 114.

To these strong passages, many others equally decisive might easily be added. The writings of the Fathers abound with them; and the advocates of those principles, upon which the endless diversities of modern Christians are supported, must not appeal to the testimony of antiquity. Examples indeed of religious differences may be drawn from the earliest records of the Church; but these examples are also marked in her annals by reproof so pointed, by censures so severe, as must baffle every attempt to cite them in defence of later divisions. And the disputant, who would still be heard in their favour, will be compelled to maintain, either that the more immediate successors of the Apostles were ignorant of the true nature of the Church,

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and the duties of its members; or that the practice, which they so deeply lamented, as a sin scarcely to be expiated, is now, by some change in the circumstances of man and the counsels of God, become not only venial, but defensible; not only innocent, but laudable; not only such as a God of mercy will pardon, but such as he will regard with complacency and approbation. Far different were the sentiments of a learned commentator upon the apostolic Fathers; when comparing the practices of his own times, not with those which Clement, the author whom he was illustrating, thought worthy of reproof and condemnation; but with that true Christian unanimity, which, to their shame, he reminded the factious Corinthians that they had destroyed. "O tempora," says he, "vere aurea, et mores, Christo, ac sacro sancto ejus nomine dignissimos! cum unanimitas in Ecclesia floreret, et populus omnis Christianus in solidam corporis unitatem arctissimæ concordiæ glutino copularetur. Longe aliter in his novissimis diebus, et mundi senio (quod deflere facilius est quam corrigere) cum jurgiis et contentionibus in religione, quam vinculum pacis esse oporteret, Christi tunica inconsutilis et individua, in varias partes scinditur, et corpus ejus mysticum dissidio compaginis separatur, ut loquitur Cyprianus, ac divulsis laceratione visceribus in frusta discerpitur. Fraternitas omnis hodie extincta est, unanimitas primæva non tantum diminuta, de quo Cyprianus suis temporibus queritur, sed e medio penitus sublata esse videtur, Dii meliora piis." *Junii Annot. ad Clementis Epist.* 1am. *ad Corinth.* sect. 2. Edit. Cotelerii.

NOTE LXXXII.

St. Paul suffered martyrdom A. D. 63. These epistles were probably written A. D. 64. or 65. teste Dodwell. See Cave Hist. Lit. vol. i. p. 28. The following passage will sufficiently illustrate the distracted state of the Corinthian church, at the time it was addressed by Clement. Τί ἔρις, καὶ θυμοὶ, καὶ διχοστασίαι, καὶ σχίσματα, πόλεμός τε ἐν ὑμῖν; ἢ οὐχὶ ἕνα Θεὸν ἔχομεν, καὶ ἕνα Χριστόν; καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος τὸ ἐκχυθὲν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς, καὶ μία κλῆσις ἐν Χριστῷ, ἵνα τι διέλκομεν καὶ διασπῶμεν τὰ μέλη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ στασιάζομεν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα τὸ ἴδιον, καὶ εἰς τοσαύτην ἀπόνοιαν ἐρ-

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χόμεθα, ὥστε ἐπιλαθέσθαι ἡμᾶς ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν ἀλλήλων; μνήσθητε τῶν λόγων Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν. εἶπε γάρ· Οὐαὶ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐκείνῳ· καλὸν ἦν αὐτῷ εἰ οὐκ ἐγεννήθη, ἢ ἕνα τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν μου σκανδαλίσαι· κρεῖττον ἦν αὐτῷ περιτεθῆναι μύλον, καὶ καταποντισθῆναι εἰς τὴν θάλασσαν, ἢ ἕνα τῶν μικρῶν μου σκανδαλίσαι. τὰ σχίσματα ὑμῶν πολλοὺς διέστρεψεν, πολλοὺς εἰς ἀθυμίαν ἔβαλεν, πολλοὺς εἰς διςαγμὸν, τοὺς πάντας ἡμᾶς εἰς λύπην· καὶ ἐπίμονος ὑμῶν ἐστιν ἡ ςάσις. *Clementis ad Cor. Epist.* i. s. 46. Edit. Cotelerii.

NOTE LXXXIII.

The hasty and inconsiderate persons, who seek to find an apology for their own separation in the failings and weaknesses of those, whose ministry they renounce, would do well to apply to themselves the reproof, which Cyprian addressed to the separatists of his time; who urged a somewhat similar plea in defence of their conduct; and sought to conceal their own schism, under an affected abhorrence of some irregularities, which they conceived to exist in the Church. "Etsi videntur in Ecclesia esse zizania, non tamen impediri debet aut fides aut caritas nostra, ut quoniam zizania esse in Ecclesia cernimus, ipsi de Ecclesia recedamus. Nobis tantummodo laborandum est ut frumentum esse possimus, ut cum cœperit frumentum dominicis horreis condi, fructum pro opere nostro ac labore capiamus. Apostolus in epistola sua dicit: In domo autem magna non solum vasa sunt aurea, et argentea; sed et lignea, et fictilia, et quædam quidem honorata, quædam vero inhonorata. Nos operam demus, et quantum possumus laboremus, ut vas aureum vel argenteum simus: ceterum fictilia vasa confringere Domino soli concessum est, cui et virga ferrea data est. Esse non potest major Domino suo servus. Nec quisquam sibi quod soli filio pater tribuit, vindicare potest; ut putet aut ad aream ventilandam et purgandam palam ferre se jam posse, aut a frumento universa zizania humano judicio segregare. Superba est ista obstinatio, et sacrilega præsumtio, quam sibi furor pravus assumit: et dum dominum sibi semper quidam, plusquam mitis justitia deposcit, assumunt, de Ecclesia pereunt: et dum se inso-

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lenter extollunt, ipso suo tumore cœcati veritatis lumen amittunt." *Cyprian. Epist.* liv. p. 99. Edit. Oxon.

NOTE LXXXIV.

"Tanquam habentes in vobis vestigia affectuum non satis Christianorum." *Grotius, Annot. in* 1 Cor. c. iii. v. 1.

NOTE LXXXV.

"Sermones qui coram omnibus habentur, accommodantur captui partis majoris. Pars autem major Corinthiaci cœtus non multum adhuc in doctrina Christi, quæ spiritualis erat, profecerat. Ideo magis adhuc opus habebant instillatione præceptorum Christi ad edomandas affectuum malorum reliquias, quam explicatione figurarum, quæ latebant in veteri historia, et novi fœderis res adumbrabant. Est germanus huic locus, et hunc explicans, ad Hebræos, c. iv. 11, 12, 13, 14. ubi pariter lac sunt elementa Christianæ religionis, cibus vero explicatio mysteriorum in veteri historia latentium. Hæc conveniunt iis qui multum profecere in pietate: illa necessaria sunt incipientibus." *Grotius, ut sup.*

NOTE LXXXVI.

"Inter opera carnis enumerat Apostolus ἔρεις, ζήλους, et διχοστασίας. (Gal. v. 20.) Carnis scilicet nomine omnes affectus respiciens, qui non Dei honorem et proximi salutem præcipue respiciunt, sed ea quæ nostra sunt et nobis placent." *Grotius.*

NOTE LXXXVII.

This interpretation may be further supported by the general analogy of the Apostle's language. In many parts of his epistles, he has so opposed "the flesh," or carnal principle, to "the spirit," as to shew, that by the former he means the character of man in his natural state, in contradistinction to that which the Christian is enabled to assume by the Spirit of regeneration received at his baptism; and which he is obliged by the precepts of the Gospel to cherish and improve.

In that remarkable passage in his Epistle to the Romans, (ch. vii.) wherein, adopting the language which

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an unregenerate person might be supposed to hold, he forcibly describes the struggle which takes place between his conscience and his passions, he says, "the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin," (v. 14;) that is, "the law in the mind;" or, as he calls it in another place, "the law of God written in the heart," (Rom. ii. 15;) which points out the difference between good and evil, forcibly warning us from the latter, and impelling us to the former; is pure in itself, and wholly adapted to the conceptions and inclinations of a pure and spiritual being: but man in a state of nature is "carnal;" the fleshly principle predominates in his heart; and as it is of itself inclined to wickedness, the person under its control may be said to be "sold under sin;" being in the state of a slave, who cannot refuse to obey the dictates of his master. In the next chapter, (Rom. viii.) adverting to the consequences of this unhappy bondage, and contrasting with them the blessed effects of that glorious liberty, unto which, as Christians, we are redeemed, he declares, that "to be carnally minded," that is, to be influenced by the disposition which reigns in the natural man, "is death;" it leads to condemnation; but "to be spiritually minded," or under the direction of real Christian affections, "is life and peace," (v. 6.) Again, in his second epistle to the Corinthians, ch. x. explaining the greatness of his apostolic authority, he says; "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds:" in other words, the censures with which we are empowered to enforce submission, are not of mere weak, uncertain, and temporary efficacy, as those of earthly rulers, which extend to the body only: ours is a spiritual power, to be exercised upon your minds and consciences, by the aid of God's Holy Spirit, for the destruction of those strong holds of sin, which evil habits and prejudices have erected in your hearts.

NOTE LXXXVIII.

"Vivitis ut plerique homines solent, non ex Dei præscripto: non κατὰ Θεὸν, ut loquitur Apostolus,

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Rom. viii. 27. Homo enim, hoc loco, Deo opponitur." *Grotius.*

NOTE LXXXIX.

The brief account of this event given by the inspired historian is commented upon by two Apostles in a manner which forcibly leads us to this conclusion. We are told, in the epistle to the Hebrews, (ch. xi. v. 4.) that Abel's sacrifice was more excellent than Cain's, because it was offered by faith: and if we recollect that this sacrifice was a lamb out of the flock, (Gen. iv. 4.) as Christians we shall immediately understand what the faith of Abel was, (see Bp. Horne's Considerations on the Life and Death of Abel;) and the acceptance of his offering, when contrasted with the rejection of that of Cain, will convince us, that faith in a future Redeemer, and a sacrifice typical of the atonement which he was to make for men, was the original service required by God. To this mode of worship Cain, it appears, neglected to conform. Setting up his own judgment and his own wisdom as the rule by which he was to serve God, and probably seeing nothing in the death of an innocent animal which could, according to his carnal conception, be pleasing to the Almighty; he brought the fruit of the ground, as his offering, (See Shuckford's Connection, vol. i. p. 87. and the extract from Cloppenburgh in the note.) The sacrifice then of Abel was a token of his faith in God's promises, and of his readiness to conform to the religious ceremonial which he had instituted. The offering of Cain, on the other hand, was an instance of pride: it shewed, that he thought himself wise enough to determine the service with which God would be pleased; and that he refused to listen to the directions, which had been given on the subject. "His works" therefore, as St. John observes, (1 John iii. 12.) "were evil," and those of his brother "were righteous:" and the consequence was, that God "had respect unto Abel, and unto his offering; but unto Cain, and unto his offering, he had not respect," (Gen. iv. 4, 5.) The pride, which first led Cain to substitute his own imagination for the appointed mode

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of worshipping God, could not but be severely mortified at a rebuke, which not only marked the impropriety of his own conduct, but awakened a suspicion (vide *Wells's Commentary*, and *Bibliotheca Bibl. in loco*) that his brother would be preferred before him, to the prejudice of his birthright. "He was wrath," therefore, "and his countenance fell;" (Gen. iv. 5.) And, as he was unable to revenge himself upon God, in the blindness of his fury he raised his hand against the life of his unoffending brother. (See Estius, as cited Poli Synops. in loco; also Doddridge on 1 John iii. 12; Shuckford's Connect. vol. i. p. 2.)

NOTE XC.

The priesthood was clearly the object of Korah's ambition; though, with the usual art of a demagogue, he endeavoured to conceal his personal views, under an affected zeal for the rights of the people. "Ye take too much upon you," said he to Moses and Aaron, "seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" (Numb. xvi. 3.) Therefore Moses directly taxes him with this design; "Seek ye the priesthood also?" (v. 10.) It is the general opinion of the commentators on this chapter, that, as before the especial call of Aaron, every man might offer sacrifices in his own family, as its priest; Korah's anger was excited by the ordinance, which confined this dignified and lucrative office to Aaron and his descendants. See Grotius, as cited Poli Syn.; and Patrick, on Numb. xvi. 8; also Leslie's Theol. Works, vol. ii. p. 724; and Rehearsals, vol. iv. p. 136.

NOTE XCI.

The heedless presumption, with which men every day disregard the testimony of the Scriptures upon this subject, cannot but astonish those, who have been accustomed to regard them, not only as a depository of the doctrines, which Christians are to believe; but also as an authentic record of the form of spiritual government, which Christ has established for the main-

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tenance and preservation of his Church. Unprejudiced persons will consider this to be a self-evident truth, that none can act authoritatively in the name of Christ, but by his commission. When therefore they find him limiting that commission to those, deriving it through the particular persons originally invested with it by himself; when they remember that the whole Church, wherever dispersed, for 1500 years universally acknowledged a regular succession from those persons to be the only valid title to the Christian priesthood; and that, however its several branches disagreed in the interpretation of particular doctrines, or in the observance of particular ceremonies, this was a point undisputed, religiously maintained at all times, in all places, and by all Christians; they will observe the present unsettled state of public opinion upon this subject with amazement and alarm. The time indeed is now come, when to assert our exclusive commission, is to arm no inconsiderable portion of the world against us, as the revivers of exploded priestcraft: but we can scarcely maintain it in more decided language, than was used by writers of former days, whose names are yet unstained with a suspicion of bigotry or intolerance; whose labours are yet extolled, as the glory of the English Church. "The ministry of things divine," says Hooker, "is a function, which as God did himself institute, so neither may men undertake the same but by authority and power given them in lawful manner. That God, which is no way deficient or wanting unto man in necessaries, and hath therefore given us the light of his heavenly truth, because without that inestimable benefit we must needs have wandered in darkness to our endless perdition and woe, hath, in the like abundance of mercies, ordained certain to attend upon the due execution of requisite parts and offices therein prescribed, for the good of the whole world; which men thereunto assigned do hold their authority from him, whether they be such as himself immediately, or as the Church in his name, investeth; it being neither possible for all, nor for every man without distinction convenient, to take upon him a charge of so great importance.

"They are therefore ministers of God, not only by way

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of subordination as princes and civil magistrates, whose execution of judgment and justice the supreme hand of divine Providence doth uphold; but ministers of God, as from whom their authority is derived, and not from men. For in that they are Christ's ambassadors and his labourers, who should give them their commission but he whose most inward affairs they manage? Is not God alone the Father of spirits? Are not souls the purchase of Jesus Christ? What angel in heaven could have said to man, as our Lord did unto Peter, Feed my sheep;—preach;—baptize;—do this in remembrance of me;—whose sins ye retain, they are retained; and their offences in heaven pardoned, whose faults you shall on earth forgive? What think we? are these terrestrial sounds, or else are they voices uttered out of the clouds above? The power of the ministry of God translateth out of darkness into glory, it raiseth men from the earth, and bringeth God himself from heaven; by blessing visible elements, it maketh them invisible grace; it giveth daily the Holy Ghost, it hath to dispose of that flesh which was given for the life of the world, and that blood which was poured out to redeem souls; when it poureth malediction upon the heads of the wicked, they perish; when it revoketh the same, they revive. O wretched blindness, if we admire not so great power; more wretched, if we consider it aright, and, notwithstanding, imagine that any beside God can bestow it." *Hooker's Eccles. Pol.* vol. ii. b. 5. s. 77.

NOTE XCII.

"As I heartily exhort you to contend earnestly for the primitive faith against innovations; so I think it needful to add a word or two concerning the temper of your zeal. For zeal, like fire, is to be managed with great care and caution, and set in a secure place. It is an excellent servant, but an intolerable master; and the best men, if they be not circumspect, may in the best causes be hurried by it into indecent or sinful excesses, as some of the ancient Fathers I am afraid, and some I am sure, were. Some things I could shew have dropt from the mouths of confessors, in confession which I do not approve of; and other from the pens of some

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few pious Fathers; as from that of Lucifer, in his two books against Constantius, which I condemn: and therefore, in the first place, let me advise you, not to let zeal have the dominion over you, but to take care that you always have the dominion over it, that it do not carry you into any indecent or sinful aberrations in point of respect or duty towards any person, to whom respect or duty is due. A man that strives for mastery, saith the Apostle, is not crowned unless he strive lawfully; and according to thisholy maxim, unless we strive lawfully, without transgressing the Christian bounds of charity, meekness, and subjection, we cannot expect that God shall bless our endeavours with success, or reward us for our pains. We must take care so to temper and regulate our zeal for the primitive faith, as to give no just occasion of offence to those against whom we contend for it. Our words must be as soft and gentle, and our actions as obliging, as the nature of the controversy will possibly bear; and whether they are our superiors, inferiors, or equals, we had better supererogate than fall short in the respective offices due unto them, and receive ten provocations and offences than give one that is just. In a word, our whole behaviour to our adversaries ought to be such, as to convince them, if possible, that we have no quarrel at their persons or offices, though we oppose their religion; and that we may be sure to manage our zeal according to these directions, let this be our rule, that when it stands in doubtful competition with any other Christian duty, we run the hazard of offending rather in defect than excess." *Discourses by Geo. Hickes*, vol. ii. p. 250.

NOTE XCIII.

The law of the Six Articles, that bloody act, as it has been deservedly called, sufficiently proves, that the bias of Henry's mind was in favour of the worst doctrinal errors of the Papists: by that act, the denial of transubstantiation subjected the offender to "have and suffer judgment, execution, paine, and paines of death by way of burning, without any abjuration, benefit of the clergy, or sanctuary, to be therefore permitted, had, allowed, admitted, or suffered." And his honours and pos-

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sessions of every kind were declared forfeited to the King, as in any cases of high treason. All who maintained the necessity of the communion in both kinds; or that it was lawful for priests to marry; all opponents of vows of chastity, of private masses, and auricular confession; were subject, for the first offence, to forfeiture and imprisonment during the king's pleasure; for the second, to suffer as felons. But every person in orders, or under a vow of chastity, who contracted marriage, was to be adjudged as a felon, and lose both life, and forfeit goods, as in the case of felony without benefit of clergy. The atrocious cruelty of this act was as obvious, as the falsehood of the doctrines which it was made to enforce. "But although these Six Articles," says Fox, "conteined manifest errours, heresies, and absurdities against all Scripture and learning, (as all men having any judgement in God's word may plainelie understand,) yet such was the miserable adversitie of that time, and the power of darknes, that the simple cause of truth and of religion was utterlie left desolate and forsaken of all friends. For every man seeing the king's minde so fully addict upon politike respectes to have these articles passe forward, few or none in all that parliament would appeare, which either could perceive that was to be defended or durst defend that they knew to be true, save only Cranmer Archbishop of Canturburie, who then being married (as is supposed) like a constant patron of God's cause, took upon him the earnest defence of the truth oppressed in the parliament, three daies togither disputing against those six wicked artieles, bringing forth such allegations and authorities as might easilie have helped the cause, *nisi pars major vicisset, ut sæpe solet, meliorem.* Who in the said disputation behaved himselfe with such humble modesty and with such obedience in words towards his prince, protesting the cause not to be his but the cause of Almighty God, that neither his enterprise was misliked of the king, and again his reasons and allegations were so strong, that well they could not be refuted. Wherefore the king (who ever bare speciall favour unto him) wel liking his zealous defence, only willed him to depart out of the Parliament House unto the Councell

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Chamber, for a time, (for safeguard of his conscience;) till the act should passe, and be granted: which he notwithstanding with humble protestation refused to doe." *Foxe's Acts, as cited in Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 474.

NOTE XCIV.

"To manie which be yet alive," says Foxe, "and can testifie these things, it is not unknowne, how variable the state of religion stood in these daies: how hardlie and with what difficultie it came forth: what chances and changes it suffered. Even as the king was ruled, and gave eare sometime to one, and sometime to another, so one while it went forward, at another season as much backeward againe, and sometime clean altered and changed for a season, according as they could preyaile which were about the king." *Foxe's Acts, Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 466.

NOTE XCV.

The letters of Ridley afford many instances of that admirable temper which prevailed in the counsels and conduct of these excellent men. To his chaplain West he writes, "You have knowne me long indeed: in the which time it hath chaunced me, as you say, to mislike some things. It is true, I grant: for sodaine changes without substantiall and necessarie cause, and the headdy setting forth of extreamities, I did never love." His words to Bradford, in reference to the predestinarian controversy, deserve, as his biographer has well observed, to be written in letters of gold. "*Sir, In those matters I am so fearful, that I dare not speak farther, yea almost none otherwise, than the very texte dothe, as it were, lead me by the hand.*" In a letter to Grindall, written on occasion of the troubles then broken out at Frankfort, he thus speaks of the impetuous and fiery Knox; "Alas! that our brother Knox could not beare with our Booke of Common Prayer, in matters, against which, although (I grant) a man, as he is, of wit and learning, may finde to make apparent reasons, but I suppose he cannot be able soundly to disprove by God's word, the reason he maketh against the Litany, and the

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fault *per sanguinem et sudorem*, he findeth in the same. I doe marveile how he can or dare avouch them before the learned men that be with you." *Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. art. *Ridley*.

NOTE XCVI.

Upon the most solemn occasions we find them appealing to the authority of the Fathers, in favour of their doctrines; declaring that they were not the supporters of new or unheard of opinions: but that the tenets which they professed were no other than those which the Church, in the purest and most ancient periods of her history, universally maintained. When before the commissioners at Oxford, Cranmer thus expressed himself: "As for the matter of heresie, and schisme wherewith hee was charged, he protested and called God to witnesse, that hee knew none that hee maintained. But if that were an heresie to deny the Pope's authoritie, and the religion which the See of Rome hath published to the world these latter yeares, then all the ancient Fathers of the primitive Church, the Apostles, and Christ himselfe, taught heresie." *Wordsworth, Eccles. Biog.* art. *Cranmer*, vol. iii. p. 535. In his appeal from the Pope to the next general council, presented by him to the Bishops Thirlby and Bonner, he says, "I proteste and openly confesse, that in all my doctrine and preaching, both of the sacrament, and of other my doctrine whatsoever it be, not only I meane and judge those things, as the Catholic Church, and the most holy Fathers of old with one accord have meant and judged, but also I would gladly use the same words that they used, and not use any other words, but to set my hand to all and singular their speeches, phrases, waies, and forms of speech, which they do use in their treatises upon the sacrament, and to keep still their interpretation. But in this thing I only am accused for an hereticke, because I allowe not the doctrine lately brought in of the sacrament, and because I consent not to wordes not accustomed in Scripture, and unknowne to the ancient Fathers, but newly invented and brought in by men, and belonging to the destruction of soules, and overthrowing of the pure and

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old religion." *Foxe's Acts, Wordsworth's Cranmer, Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 582.

Ridley also, when examined before the commissioners at Oxford, justified his conduct by a similar appeal to the judgment of antiquity. "When," says he, "I perceive the greatest part of Christianity to be infected with the poyson of the see of Rome, I repaire to the usage of the primitive Church, which I finde cleane contrary to the Pope's decrees: as in that the priest receiveth alone; that it is made unlawfull to the laitie to receive in both kinds, and such like. Wherefore, it requireth that I prefer the antiquity of the primitive Church before the novelty of the Romish Church." *Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.* article *Latimer*, vol. iii. p. 230.

NOTE XCVII.

"Among others that have reformed their churches, I have often," saith Saravia, "admired the wisdom of those who restored the true worship of God to the Church of England; who so tempered themselves, that they cannot be reproved for having departed from the ancient and primitive custom of the Church of God; and that moderation they have used, that by their example they have invited others to reform, and deterred none." *Saravia, as quoted in Puller's Moderation*, p. 427.

NOTE XCVIII.

"Quod si me conjectura non fallit, totius reformationis pars integerrima est in Anglia, ubi cum studio veritatis viget studium antiquitatis." *Is. Casaubon. Epist. ad Salmasium.*

"Anglicanam intelligo omnium reformatarum reformatissimam." *Forbes, Consid. Modest. Præf. vide citat. Puller's Moderation*, p. 429. Again, p. 539, Puller, citing an earnest prayer of Isaac Casaubon that it would please the Lord Jesus to preserve this Church of England, and give a sound mind to those Nonconformists, who deride the rites and ceremonies of it, proceeds thus: "And since I have named the learned Casaubon, 'tis most suitable here also to add some of his words to King James. 'Sir, you have a Church in these king-

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doms, partly so framed of old, and partly by great labours of late so restored, that now no Church whatsoever comes nearer than yours to the form of the primitive flourishing Church, having taken just the middle way between those that offended in excess and defect: in which moderation the Church of England hath obtained this first of all, that those very persons who envied her happiness, yet by comparing one with the other, have been compelled to praise her.'" *Puller, ut supra.*

NOTE XCIX.

Bishop Hall, in his "Episcopacy by divine Right," after producing the evidence of various celebrated men among the foreign Reformers, in favour of that model of ecclesiastical government preserved in the English Church, concludes with the following interesting anecdote. "What should I need to thicken the air with clouds of witnesses? There is witnesse enough in the late Synod of Dort.; when the Bishop of Llandaffe had in a speech of his touch't upon episcopal government, and shewed that the want thereof gave opportunities to those divisions that were then on foot in the Netherlands; Bogermannus, the president of that assembly, stood up, and in good allowance of what had been spoken, said, 'Domine, nos non sumus adeo felices;' 'Alas, my Lord, we are not so happy.' Neither did he speak this in a fashionable compliment, (neither the person, nor the place, nor the hearers were fit for that,) but in a sad gravity, and conscionable profession of a known truth; neither would he, being the mouth of that select assembly, have thought it safe to passe these words before the deputies of the States, and so many venerable divines of foreign parts, besides their own, if he had not supposed this so clear a truth as that synod would neither disrelish nor contradict." *Hall's Works*, folio, vol. iii. p. 127.

NOTE C.

When our Reformers declared, that holy Scripture was the only rule of faith, (Art. 6.) and antiquity the best interpreter of Scripture; (see Canon set forth in our Church with the Articles, A. D. 1571.) they pro-

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vided, as far as human wisdom could provide, against those vexations and endless controversies, which the oppositions of science falsely so called, and a vain desire of being wise above what is written, so frequently produce to the disturbance of Christian unity, and the unavoidable breach of that charity, of which unity is the best preservative. To this wise and temperate determination we find the foreign writers of those days frequently referring with unqualified approbation. "Non possum non laudare præclarum Angliæ canonem anni 1571. Imprimis vero videbunt concionatores, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod a populo religiose teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ Veteris aut Novi Testamenti; quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina Catholici Patres ac veteres episcopi collegerint." *Grotius, de Imp. sum. potest.* c. vi. s. 9. Another testimony of Grotius I find cited by Gloster Ridley, in his first letter to the author of the Confessional, which farther illustrates his opinion. "In Anglia vides quam bene processerit dogmatum noxiorum repurgatio; hac maxime de causa quod qui id sanctissimum negotium procurandum suscepere, *nihil admiserint novi, nihil* sui; sed ad meliora secula intentam habuere oculorum aciem." *Epist. ad Joan. Corvin.* Is. Casaubon, in a letter to Heinsius, thus alludes to the same rule of our Church. "Whereas I own no other foundation of true religion, than the holy and divine inspired Scriptures, with Melancthon and the Church of England, I wish all doctrines of faith were brought to us, derived from the fountain of Scripture by the channels of antiquity; otherwise what end will there be of innovation?" *Casaubon, Ep. Eccles.* as quoted by *Puller, Moderation,* &c. p. 81. In another part of the same work may be found the following citations to the same effect. "Very famous," saith Dr. Tully, "through the whole world is the most prudent moderation of the Church of England in her definitions of faith, in which surely to all she offers herself in so equal a poise, that she can afford no offence to sober minds and lovers of truth; nor doth she give any occasion of cavilling to slight and petulant dispositions, of which in our age there is such a swarm. And Sancta Clara saith, the

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English confession goes on safely within this latitude, neither binding its followers to one side or other, but freely leaves these matters (of controversy) to scholastic disputation." *Puller, ut supra*, p. 139.

Upon this view of the subject, a late ornament of our Church has thus delivered his opinion: and every student in divinity, who wishes to be able to form a proper estimate of the superior claims of our establishment to his reverence and affection, will do well to follow his advice. "Profuerit etiam Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ libros cum his[a] conferre, ex qua comparatione luculentior, ut opinamur, evadet prudentia Ecclesiæ nostræ, quæ cum antiquarum confessionum, præcipue Augustanæ, vestigiis inhæserit, et studiosa certe fuerit, ut cum aliis communionem retineret, et in offensionem quam minimam incurreret, summam tamen cautelam adhibuit, nequid durum aut facile abutendum suis imponeret, et in eo laboravit maxime, ut illud quod ex utraque parte certum sit et plane verum constanter teneret, cætera in medio relinqueret." *Præfat. ad Syllogen Confess.* Oxon. 1804.

NOTE CI.

One of Hooper's objections to the habits was, that "they were inventions of Antichrist, and that we ought to be estranged, not only from the Pope, but from all his devices." To this Peter Martyr, who, though in his private judgment he was unfriendly to the habits, was yet too wise and moderate a man to think of resisting the injunctions of lawful authority in matters indifferent, answered; that the distinction of garments existed in the Church before the tyranny of the Pope; "Nor did he think that, in case it were granted that it was invented by the Pope, that the iniquity of Popery was so great, that whatsoever it touched was so dyed and polluted thereby, that good and godly men might not use it to any holy purpose." *Strype's Cranmer*, b. ii. c. 17.

"Calvin and some others," says Stillingfleet, "did not cease by letters, and other ways, to insinuate, that

[a] Nempe. Confessionibus exterarum Ecclesiarum.

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our Reformation was imperfect, so long as any of the dregs of Popery remained. So they called the use of those ceremonies, which they could not deny to have been far more ancient than the great apostasy of the Roman Church. Calvin, in his letter to the Protector, avows this to be the best rule of Reformation, to go as far from Popery as they could; and therefore, what habits and ceremonies had been abused in the time of Popery were to be removed, lest others were hardened in their superstition thereby." *Unreasonableness of Separation*, part i. pag. 14.

NOTE CII.

A very interesting account of the troubles at Frankfort will be found in the Phœnix, vol. ii. It was evidently written by a friend of the Nonconformist party; but it contains a clear statement of the facts as they occurred, although interspersed with reflections, which shew the bias of the author's mind. A brief relation of this unhappy dispute may also be found in Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, part i.

NOTE CIII.

See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 47, 48; also the Letter of the Congregation at Frankfort to the Students of Zurick, p. 58. Again, p. 63, the author tells us, "At length it was agreed that the order of Geneva (which then was already printed in English, and some copys there among them) should take place as an order most godly and farthest off from superstition." See also the Letter of Knox and others to Calvin, requesting his judgment upon the English Liturgy, p. 64; and the account of Knox's, Sermon, p. 72.

NOTE CIV.

In his Letter to Cranmer, Calvin shews an inclination to come into England. "Quantum ad me attinet, si quis mei usus fore videbitur, ne decem quidem maria, si opus sit, ob eam rem trajicere pigeat. Si de juvando tantum Angliæ regno ageretur, jam mihi ea satis legitima ratio foret." The minute detail into which he enters, in his letter of advice and direction to the Pro-

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tector Somerset, shews what would have been the nature of his interference, had his offer been accepted. Cranmer, however, was contented with corresponding with him; and perhaps the hasty and impetuous temper of the man, which was apparent, not only from his conduct at Geneva, but also from the very pressing and even censorious terms in which he urged the Archbishop to proceed more quickly in the work of Reformation, may have disgusted him; and awakened his fear of the consequences which might result from the more immediate and personal exertions of such a character. Heylin indeed says, that "the Archbishop knew the man, and refused his offer of assistance." *Hist. of Reform.* an. 1548.

NOTE CV.

See Phœnix, vol. ii. p. 78. and the whole tenour of the language used throughout the tract, in speaking of the Nonconformist party.

NOTE CVI.

A remarkable anecdote of Cartwright's repentance may be mentioned, upon the authority of Sir H. Yelverton; who, in his Epistle to the Reader, prefixed to Bp. Morton's "Episcopacy Justified," tells us, "that when he came to dy, which he did at Warwick in the hospital, of which Robert Dudley Earl of Leicester had made him master, he did seriously lament the unnecessary troubles he had caused in the Church, by the schism he had been the great fomenter of; and wished he was to begin his life again, that he might testifie to the world the dislike he had of his former ways. And in this opinion he died." (p. 66.) Whatever credibility may attach to this anecdote, certain it is, that Cartwright, when removed from the heat of controversy, was anxious to stop the progress of separation. There is a letter extant, written by him to Harrison, in which he argues at some length, and with great earnestness, against the opinion, that the Church of England is not a true church of Christ, and that communion with her is unlawful. "If," says he, "it be shewed, that the ordinary assemblyes of those which professe the Gos-

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pel in Englande be the churches of Christ, it seemeth that the way will bee paved and plained for mutuall entercourse betweene us, thus therefore it seemeth it may be perfourmed, those assemblyes which have Christ for their head, and the same also for their foundation, are God's churches, such are the assemblyes of Englande, therefore, &c." Again: "Seeing that the Lord in mercy hath set up divers burning lamps in those assemblies, whereby light is conveyed more or lesse into all the parts almost of that land, it seemeth that the Church of England should receive injury, if it should not be accounted among the golden candlesticks which seeme to keepe out darknes and night from the Lord's sanctuary, untill such time as the day starre spring and Lucifer do rise in our hearts." At the conclusion of his letter, he says expressly, "I write in good assurance touching the rightfull title of the churches of Christ to be due to the assemblyes in England." See *An Answer to Master Cartwright his Letter, with the Letter printed at the end.* London. 4to. no date.

Dr. Sparkes, one of the advocates for the Nonconformists at the Hampton-Court Conference, afterwards published a treatise, which he called "A brotherly Perswasion to Unitie and Uniformitie in Judgment and Practice touching the received and present ecclesiasticall Government, and the authorized Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England," 4to. 1607. In his Epistle to the Christian Reader, he takes great pains to prove that he has not altered his mind or judgment on the subject of separation; that he always thought the rites and ordinances of the Church "were rather to be yeelded unto, being but of the nature they are, and being urged no otherwise then in deed and truth they be, by our Church, then that any minister should for his refusing conformity thereunto suffer himself to be put from the use of his gifts, place, and ministry." Of the episcopal form of church-government he writes; "I may with a safe and good conscience both before God and man proteste, that I never yet coulde bee brought by any thing that I have ever heard or read to that purpose, these foure and thirtie years that I have been in the ministerie, (and yet I thinke I have read most, if not all

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that hath beene since written to that ende,) eyther to thinke that forme and plott of church-government, so much admired and magnifyed as the perpetual and onely fit government for Christes Church by a paritie of ministers and their presbiteries, eyther fitting for such a monarchye as this is, or any way indeede so aunsweerable or conformable to the perpetuall government used by God for and in his Church, eyther since Moses or Christ, during the storie, eyther of Newe Testament or Olde, as this by archbishopps, bishoppes, and pastors of ours is." Of our Liturgy he says: "Though with Bucer in his opinion given of our Common Book, I have thought certayne things therein so set downe, as that nisi candide intelligantur, that is, unlesse they bee favourably understood, they seeme to carrie some shew of contrarietie to the Word of God, yet in verie deede, I never thought any thing therein, or within the compasse of the required subscription, such, but that the same by such a charitable and favourable construction, and that also but well standing with the professed and publickely established doctrine of our Church, and with the best and true meaning of the bookes themselves, whence the objections to the contrarie did seeme to arise, might with a good conscience, for the peace and good of the Church, be quietly yealded unto." Testimonies on this subject might easily be multiplied: the reader who wishes to pursue the enquiry may be referred to Retractations and Repentings, by John Ellis, 4to. London, 1662; Cassander Anglicanus, by John Sprint, London, 1619. &c. Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation contains abundance of evidence of the same kind.

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SERMON VI.

NOTE CVII.

JOHN Ellis, in a tract printed 1662, which he called his "Retractations and Repentings," (see Note CVI.) after having stated the reasons which first led him to join the separation, thus declares what induced him to return into the Church. "I found my expectation of the beauty of holiness, in unity, order, and more effectual edification in faith, love, meekness, patience, temperance, peace, and mortification, mainly frustrated. Factions, confusion, breaches, *doting* about fruitlesse endless questions; time vainly spent in them. The pastor (an honest well-meaning man) despised. *Covetousness, contempt* of others, and in some, *impurities*, &c. growing, and *injustice* eminent.——Also I observed, that almost *all* the companies of this way fell in *sunder*, or into *horrible opinions*, or *lewd practices*, as well as ours. Besides, whilst we were in our vain altercations on the *Lord's day*, after the afternoon sermon, *our families were neglected*. Withal, others in the parochial assemblies were deserted, both in point of pastoral offices, as of other care, whilst they were looked upon as people of another world. Moreover they were brought into a *maze*, not knowing which way to take, who to follow, nor *whether they were in the way of salvation or not*, and so shaking the very foundations of their faith; a most horrid evil." B. i. c. 2. p. 14. At the end of the volume is printed part of a letter written by the author to a dying friend, urging him to consider the sin he had been guilty of in leaving the Church, and to make such reparation for it as his situation would allow. The following passages bear affecting testimony to the sincerity of the author's retractation. "The next thing I

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would remember you of, is, that you have, according to the course of this world, lived in schism and separation from the Church, your minister, and the ordinances of God in the place where you live, and particularly from the holy communion.——Neither is *schism*, and withdrawing ourselves from the Church, in the place wherein wee live, and the ministry and ordinances there, a *small* sin. For it is a rending and defiling and destroying of that particular body of Christ and Church of God. Now the punishment of it is: If any man defile or destroy (so it is in the margin of your Bible) the temple of God, him will God destroy, 1 Cor. iii. 17. God is destroying of you in the midst of your years, and this is your sin. Your example makes other stones of the spiritual building (as one peece in a house falling makes way for another) fall off too. If all should do so, God should have no Church, no ministry, no worship in that place. Your father did not so, but waited humbly on God in his ordinances, and made use of such ministry as God sent, (though sometimes mean and none of the best,) and encouraged them. What is it then? First ask the Lord earnest pardon. Next go and bee *reconciled to your minister;* let proud men count never so meanly of him. *Crave his prayers, attend upon his ministry, joyn with him in public worship, bee admitted to the Lord's tables* and go not out of the world, as a *heathen* of no Church, and with no sacraments. If you will think on the premises, though your condition should bee as the *giving up of the ghost*, as Job speaks, yet God ordinarily works extraordinary things in such cases. He brings down to the grave, and raises up again; 1 Sam. ii. He kills and makes alive. Hee giveth forth the sentence of death, and afterwards quickens again; 2 Cor. i. But so that we acknowledge, that wee have sinned; Job xxxiii. Observe that place, and read Psal. cvii. Howsoever, *you will depart in peace;* namely, in the communion of Christ, his Church, and ordinances; and so, with them, be gathered into the bosome of Abraham, there to expect the second appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. If you neglect these things, my soul shall mourne in secret for you, yet with

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this comfort, that I have in part discharged it," &c. B. ii. c. 11. p. 374.

John Sprint, another Nonconformist divine, was more early in bearing his testimony against its evils. He published a tract, called "Cassander Anglicanus," 1617. In which, with much learning and ingenuity, he argues that it is the duty of all ministers to conform rather than to suffer deprivation. In his Address to the Reader he thus declares what had been his experience of the mischiefs of those divisions which he had contributed to produce. "The difference of practice hath moved authority to silence and suppresse refusers of conformitie. The disagreement in affection hath moved the ministers deprived to speake evil of persons in authority, and of conformers: whereby in the event the course of the Gospel is interrupted, and of Popery enlarged, the friends of Sion are grieved, the enemies rejoiced, the Devill gratified, and God not pleased. The Church is rent with schisme, the truth scandalized by dissention, and the ministers undone by losse of living, and the unitie of brethren living in the same house, professing the same faith, and rejoicing in the same hope, is pulled in pieces: and this like to continue God knowes how long; but all men know the longer the worse." *Cassander Anglicanus — Address to the Reader.*

If we go further back, we shall find Dr. Thomas Sparke, before mentioned as one of the commissioners appointed to advocate the cause of the Nonconformists at the Hampton-Court Conference, (see Note CVI.) treading back his own steps, and endeavouring to persuade his brethren to follow his example. This divine professed "to have received such satisfaction from King James's answers to the objections urged at that conference," that "not only in his practice he yielded universal conformity, but privately, by word and writing also, he laboured to persuade all whom he met with, to do likewise." See the Dedication of his Brotherly Persuasion. In the preamble of this treatise he thus describes the evils of contention and division. "No small griefe hath it bene unto me, to see and behold now for

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these thirty-four years (that I have been in the ministerie) the originall, growth, and continuance of these our domesticall controversies amongst ourselves, about the outward policie and rites of our Church. For whiles men have spent their time and zeale in the pursuit thereof, as of both sides they have very much, so much time, leasure, and opportunity hath Sathan got, to sow and water his tares of Atheisme, Papisme, and of sects and schismes amongst us. Insomuch that the sight and consideration thereof hath often made me to thinke, and say, as occasion has served me, to men of both sides, as Moses did to the Israelites, Exod. ii. *Why smitest thou thy fellow, being thy brother?* and as Paul sayd to the Galathians, Gal. v. *If ye thus bite one another, take heed yee be not consumed one of another.* For alwayes it hath bene, and still is my opinion in such cases; Conferant fratres, sed non contendant: for doubtlesse in such matters as these especially, St. Paul hath told us, *If any list to be contentious, that we have no such custome, nor the Church of God.*" 1 Cor. xi. 16. *Sparkes's Persuasion to Uniformitie*, p. 1.

NOTE CVIII.

"If any particular patriarch, prelate, church, or churches, how eminent so ever, shall endeavour to obtrude their own singularities upon others for catholic verities, or shall enjoin sinful duties to their subjects, or shall violate the undoubted priveleges of their inferiors, contrary to the canons of the Fathers; it is very lawful for their own subjects to disobey them, and for strangers to separate from them. And if either the one or the other have been drawn to partake of their errors, upon pretence of obedience or of Catholic communion, they may without the guilt of schism, nay they ought, to reform themselves, so as it be done by lawful authority, upon good grounds, with due moderation, without excess, or the violation of charity: and so as the separation from them be not total, but onely in their errors and innovations; nor perpetual, but only during their distempers." *Just Vindication of the Church of England, Bramhall's Works*, tome i. p. 59.

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NOTE CIX.

In forming our estimate of the character and conduct of the Nonconformists, it will become us to make allowance for the propensity of the human mind to magnify the importance of its own pursuits; and for the false medium, through which every object is viewed, during the heat of controversial discussion. Still however it will appear surprising, that questions, apparently of such trivial import, could, under any circumstances, have been agitated with so much bitterness; or that men of shrewd and cultivated minds should have maintained so weak a cause with so much pertinacity. Among the various publications of that disturbed period; publications which were for the most part devoted to mere striving about words, to no profit but to the subverting of those who read them; it is gratifying occasionally to meet with some composed in a better spirit, by men, who seem to have really laboured for peace, and to have formed a true estimate of the objects, for which the opponents of established authority were then so needlessly contending. Such appears to have been John Stileman; who, having watched the progress and seen the termination of the civil war, which these religious disputes, if they were not the cause of it, contributed at least to inflame and render more destructive, in his "Peace Offering," printed 1662, endeavours to bring the adversaries of the Church to a better mind; and to convince them, that nothing was required, but what might lawfully be submitted to, by men of humble and peaceable, that is, Christian spirits. "That," says he, "which is so straitly charged on us, we may with much ease and no difficulty obey, if we indeed will live like Christians. For the controversies and things in dispute among us are not so great, but as they might be easily composed, were we not given to contention; so, notwithstanding some differences concerning them, we might live in peace. They are not really so great, nor are the distances so wide, as through the heats and animosities of men they seem to be. Let us but purge our souls of *passion* and *prejudice*, and not consider *persons*, but *things*, we might soon be recon-

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ciled, and easily agree (as to the main) in our practice. And this consideration will aggravate the sin of our divisions, and may justly increase our shame for contending." *Stileman's Peace Offering*, ch. 2. The whole tract, a small quarto of 348 pages, is well worth reading by those who wish to form a clear and temperate view of the controversy between the Puritans and the Church.

NOTE CX.

"They who free themselves from known errours, do not thereby break church-communion: but they who make their errours to be a condition of their communion. Let him hear the conclusion of the Bishop of Chalcedon, (Brief Survey, cap. ii. sect. 4.) 'In case a particular church do require profession of her heresie, as a condition of communicating with her, division from her in this case is no schism or sin, but virtue and necessary;' where he speaketh only of material heresy. It was they who made their errours the condition of their communion, and therefore the schism and sin lieth at their doors. Secondly, schism doth not destroy the being of a church, for the church continueth a church still, after the schismaticks are gone out of it: but it destroyeth the schismaticks themselves. Lastly, to free ourselves from known errors, when they are made conditions of communion, is so far from being dangerous to salvation, that, as the Bishop confesseth truly, *it is virtue and necessary*." *Schism Guarded, Bramhall's Works*, tome i. p. 398.

NOTE CXI.

"There may be an actual and criminous separation of churches, which formerly did joyn in one and the same communion; and yet the separaters be innocent, and the persons from whom the separation is made be nocent and guilty of schism, because they gave just cause of separation from them. It is not the separation, but the cause, that makes the schism. St. Paul himself made such a separation among his disciples; (Acts xix. 9.) And Timothy is expressly commanded, that *if any man did teach otherwise, and consented not to*

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wholesome words, even to the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, ἀφίστασο ἀπὸ τῶν τοιούτων, withdraw thyself, stand aloof, or separate thyself, *from such persons;* (1 Tim. vi. 5.) It is true, that they who first desert and forsake the communion of their Christian brethren, are schismaticks; but there is a moral defection as well as local: it is no schism to forsake them, who have first themselves forsaken the common faith; wherein we have the confession of our adversaries. They who first separated themselves from the primitive pure Church, and brought in corruptions in faith, practice, liturgy, and use of sacraments, may truly be said to have been hereticks, by departing from the pure faith; and schismaticks, by dividing themselves from the external communion of the true uncorrupted Church." *Infidel Unmasked,* ch. vii. s. 112. p. 534. "It is no schism to separate from hereticks and schismaticks in their heresie and schism. This is all the crime which they can object to us. ...The court of Rome would have obtruded upon us new articles of faith; we have rejected them: they introduced unlawful rites into the Liturgies of the Church, and use of the sacraments; we have reformed them for ourselves: they went about to violate the just liberties and priviledges of our Church; we have vindicated them. And for so doing, they have by their censures and bulls separated us, and chased us from their communion. Where lies the schism?" *Just Vindication of the Church of England, Bramhall's Works,* p. 56. tome i.

Archbishop Laud, in his Conference with Fisher, rests upon the same ground. "The Church of Rome," says he, "hath solemnly decreed her *errours:* and erring, hath yet decreed withall, *That she cannot erre;* and imposed upon learned men disputed and improbable opinions, *Transubstantiation, Purgatorie,* and the *Forbearance of the Cup* in the blessed Eucharist, even against the expresse command of our Saviour, and that for *Articles of Faith.* And to keepe off *disobedience,* whatever the corruption be, she hath bound up her *decrees* upon paine of *excommunication;* and all that followes upon it. Nay this is not enough, unlesse the *fagot be kindled* to light them the way. This then may be

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enough for us to leave *Rome*, though the *Old Prophet* forsook not Israel; (3 Kings xiii. 11.) and therefore in this present case there's perill, great perill of damnable both *schisme* and *heresie*, and other sinne, by living and dying in the *Romane faith*, tainted with so many *superstitions* as at this day it is, and their tyrannie to boot." *Laud against Fisher*, p. 297.

NOTE CXII.

In a small pamphlet, entitled "A true Confession of the Faith of the Brownists," 4to. 1596, their opinion on this subject is thus plainly set forth. "Wee have always protested, and doo by these presents testifie unto all men, that wee neyther ourselves doo, neyther accompt it lawfull for others to separate from anie true church of Crist, for infirmities, falts, or errors, whatsoever, except their iniquitie bee come to such an heith, that for obstinatie they cease to be a true visible church, and bee refused and forsaken of God. And for this their renowned Church of England, wee have both by word and writing proved it unto them to bee false and counterfeit, deceiving hir children with vaine titles of the worde, sacraments, ministerie, &c. having indeed none of these in the ordinance and poure of Crist among them." *Preface*, p. 2.

NOTE CXIII.

In the "Apologie for Brownists" 4to. 1604, the reasons by which they attempted to justify their separation are thus explicitly declared. "The reasons of our leaving the ministery, worship, and Church of England are not (as they pretend) for some few faultes and corruptions remayning, such as we acknowledge may be found in the perfectest church on earth: neyther count we it lawfull for any member to forsake the fellowship of the Church for blemishes and imperfections, which every one according to his calling should studiously seek to cure, and so expect and further it untyll eyther there follow redresse or the disease be growen incureable, and the candlestick be moved out of the place. But we having through God's mercy learned to discerne betwixt the true worship of God and the anti-

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christian leitourgie, the true ministerie of Christ and antichristian priesthood and prelacy; the ordinances of Christ's Testament and Popish canons: have also learned to leave the evil and choose the good; to forsake Babell the land of our captivitie, and get us unto Sion the mount of the Lord's holynes, and place where his honour dwelleth." After enumerating their several objections to the gathering, hierarchy, and public administrations of the Church of England, they thus conclude the discussion. "Who now, in whom any sparke of true light is, cannot playnly perceive this their ministerie, worship, and church to be false and adulterate." *Apologie for Brownists, Preface,* pp. 6, 7, 11.

NOTE CXIV.

Calvin's writings will furnish satisfactory evidence that his sentiments have not been too favourably stated on the present occasion. When the dissentients at Frankfort requested his opinion of the English Service Book, he answered; "In the Liturgy of England I see that there were many tolerable foolish things," (tolerabiles ineptias;) "by these words I mean, that there was not the purity which was to be desired. These vices, though they could not at the first day be amended, yet seeing there was no manifest impiety, (nulla manifesta impietas,) they were for a season to be tolerated." Such is Wittingham's translation of the passage from the original letter; see Phœnix vol. ii. p. 69. That he had no objection to a liturgy; nay more, that he thought it expedient, that strict conformity to an established form should be exacted from all ministers; and that he gave this opinion with immediate reference to the English Liturgy, rests also upon the authority of his own words. "Quod ad formulam precum et rituum Ecclesiasticarum valde probo, ut certa illa extet, *a qua pastoribus discedere in functione sua non liceat;* tam ut consulatur quorundam simplicitati et imperitiæ, quam ut certius ita constet omnium inter se Ecclesiarum consensus." *Calvini Epist. Protectori Angliæ.*

That he did not entirely condemn the habits and ceremonies retained in our Church may be reasonably inferred; 1st. from his having persuaded Hooper to

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conform, rather than suffer deprivation: (Calvin. Epist. 120. fol. 217, as cited Cassand. Ang. p. 162.) 2dly, from his declared opinion, that it is better to be satisfied even with a lower degree of reformation in things indifferent, than to trouble the peace of the Church by an excessive stiffness and asperity. "Hoc quoque ad disciplinæ moderationem in primis requiritur quod Augustinus contra Donatistas disputat, ne vel privati homines, si viderint minus diligenter a seniorum concilio vitia corrigi, discessionem propterea continuo ab Ecclesia faciant; aut ipsi pastores, si nequeant ex animi sui voto omnia repurgare quæ correctione indigent, ideo abjiciant ministerium, vel inusitata asperitate totam Ecclesiam perturbent." *Calvini Instit.* lib. iv. c. 12. s. 11. That he had no insuperable dislike to bishops, that he neither objected to the retaining of the episcopal form of government in other churches, nor was determined against its restoration in his own, provided the change could have been made at his own time, and under his own direction, we have also historical proof to bring forward. In the Confession of Faith, drawn up in the name of the Gallican Churches, there is a distinct admission, that reverent attention is to be paid to bishops rightly discharging their duties. "Fatemur ergo episcopos sive pastores reverenter audiendos, quatenus pro suæ functionis ratione verbum Dei docent." In Calvin's treatise De Necessitate Reformandæ Ecclesiæ, the following passage occurs: "Talem si nobis hierarchiam exhibeant in qua sic emineant episcopi ut Christo subesse non recusent, ut ab illo tanquam unico capite pendeant, et ad ipsum referantur &c. tum vero nullo non anathemate dignos fatear, si qui erunt qui non eam reverenter summaque obedientia observant." It is also upon record, that Calvin made a formal offer to King Edward VI. to make him the defender of the reformed churches; and to admit bishops in them for the better preservation of unity and concord. See Strype's Mem. of Cranmer, b. 2. c. 15; also Strype's Parker, b. 2. c. 2; where a more detailed account of the overture itself, and the cause of its failure, may be found.

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NOTE CXV.

When a direct appeal was made to Beza by the Nonconformists, and he was requested to advise them how they should act; having unequivocally declared his own dislike of the habits and ceremonies of which they complained, he then proceeds to enforce the duty of submission, in this case, to the injunctions of lawful authority; and to warn them against giving occasion to Satan to disturb the Church, by their obstinacy. "Quid ergo (inquiunt patres) nobis, quibus ista obtruduntur faciendum censetis? Respondemus distinctione hic opus esse: alia enim est ministrorum, alia gregis conditio. Deinde possunt, ac etiam debent multa tolerari, quæ tamen recte non præcipiuntur. Itaque primum respondemus, etsi ista nostro quidem judicio non recte revehuntur in Ecclesiam, tamen quum non sint ex earum rerum genere, quæ per se impiæ sunt, non videri nobis illas tanti momenti, ut propterea vel pastoribus deserendum sit potius ministerium quam ut vestes illas assumant, vel gregibus omittendum publicum pabulum, potius quam ita vestitos pastores audiant. Tantum ut et pastores et greges in conscientiam non peccent (modo salva sit doctrinæ ipsius sive dogmatum puritas) suademus pastoribus, ut postquam et coram R. M. et apud Episcopos suas conscientias modesta quidem (sicut Christianos ab omni tumultu ac seditione alienos decet) et tamen gravi, prout rei magnitudo requirit, obtestatione liberarint, aperte quidem apud suos greges ea inculcent, quæ ad tollendum hoc offendiculum pertineat, et in istorum etiam abusuum emendationem, prudenter simul ac placide, prout occasionem offeret Dominus, incubant. Sed ista tamen, quæ mutare non possunt, ferant potius quam Ecclesias ob eam causam deserendo, majoribus et periculosioribus malis occasionem Sathanæ nihil aliud quærenti præbeant. Gregibus autem (integra manente doctrina) suademus ut doctrinam ipsam nihilominus attente audiant, sacramentis religiose utantur, suspirent ad Dominum, donec seria vitæ emendatione, ab eo impetrent quod ad integram Ecclesiæ instaurationem requiritur." *Bezæ ad quosdam Anglicanæ Eccles. Fratres Epistola.*

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NOTE CXVI.

The author of the "Second Answer for Communicating," who defends T. Cartwright's Letter to Harrison, Brown's colleague, against Separation, (see Note CVI.) proves "joyning with the Church a duty necessarily enjoined him of God by his providence, through his being and placing in a particular church, and justly required of him by the church or spiritual body through that same enforcing law of the coherence, and being together of the parts and members, which is the express ordinance of God. So that," saith he, "unless I hold the congregation whereof I am now, disannulled, and become no Church of Christ, for the not separating an unworthy member, I cannot voluntarily either absent myself from their assemblies to holy exercises, or yet depart away being come together, without breach of the bond of peace, sundering the cement of love, empairing the growth of the body of Christ, and incurring the guilt of schism and division." To the same purpose elsewhere. Richard Bernard calls it, "an uncharitable and lewd schism which they were guilty of," (Answer to Ainsworth, p. 13.) But I need not mention more particular authors, since in the grave confutation of the errours of the separatists, in the name of the Nonconformists it is said, That because we have a true Church, consisting of a lawful ministry, and a faithful people, therefore they cannot separate themselves from us, but they must needs incur the most shameful and odious reproach of manifest schism. And concerning the state of the persons who lived in separation, they say, We hold them all to be in a dangerous estate, (we are loth to say in a damnable estate,) as long as they continue in their schism." See *Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation*, p. 30.

NOTE CXVII.

Thomas Sampson, Dean of Christ Church, and Lawrence Humphrey, President of Magdalen College, who were the leaders of that party, which in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign refused the habits; being called upon to subscribe a declaration drawn up by the

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bishops, that the habits might be worn without sin, "modo omnis cultus et necessitatis opinio amoveatur," set their names to the paper, adding moreover this observation: "Omnia mihi licent, sed non omnia expediunt: omnia mihi licent, sed non omnia ædificant." Thus allowing the lawfulness of the vestments, though on account of their assumed inexpediency, they declined to use them. (See Strype's Parker, b. 2. c. 23.) Some years after, Humphrey conformed. (Ibid. b. 3. c. 1.) Reynolds, Sparkes, Chaderton, and Knewstub, the four commissioners for the non-conformists at Hampton Court, not only conformed themselves, but, as we have already seen in the case of Sparkes, (Notes CVI. CVII.) they studiously endeavoured to induce others to follow their example; (see *Cassander Ang.* p. 163.) Cartwright himself affirmed, that the use of the surplice was a thing indifferent, and he persuaded his brethren to use it, rather than suffer deprivation. (Ibid p. 46.) Sprint, the author of the Cassander Angl. declares the ground on which his own conviction of the lawfulness of conformity had been built. "For the ill conceit I had," says he, "against the ceremonies, I began to search into the judgement of our best latter writers, and the practice of reformed churches, from whence I went into antiquitie of primitive and purer times; where, with one consent and harmonie of judgement, I found them, and the practice of farre more, and more offensive ceremonies then ours may be supposed, and chiefely in this case. This was a ground to stay my judgement and build my resolution. From which, when once I found it, in conscience I could not, in modestie I durst, not depart in haste. For with what shew of conscience should any man turne his backe in dislike, or his face in opposition to the judgement and practise of all churches of Christ since the Apostles? and from all those worthy lights, those spirituall persons, the teachers of the churches, the champions of the trueth, the masters of religion, by whom, and by whose onely God hath in all ages propagated his Gospell, converted soules, confirmed veritie, confuted heresies, and errors, builded Christes Church, discovered and overthrown the church of antichrist? Cheifly seeing it is the judgement, not of

one or two, not of some against some other, but even of all, not one excepted, which is of note or classicall authority. And none against this judgement, excepting convicted and condemned hereticks and schismaticks, such as Donatists, Anabaptists, and our later Brownists. From thence I looked into the reasons moving them unto this judgement, and that practise, which in this Tractate are set downe. So that here is no noveltie broached, or fancy of mine own proposed to thy view, (Christian reader,) but antiquity and universality; not papall but evangelicall, according to the Scripture; not of carnall, but of spirituall persons, which may be to thy conscience as an αὐτὸς ἴφα." *Cass. Angl.—Address to the Reader.* Ellis, in his "Retractations," speaks with equal decision in favour of the polity of the Church of England. "By this testimony," says he, (that of Scripture and History,) "it appears episcopacy to have been of the greatest antiquity, universality, and of such necessity for use, that without it the churches could not be preserved neither in truth nor unity." *Ellis's Retractations*, lib. ii. c. 8. Sparke is equally explicit. Speaking of the service for Ordination, he says; "Concerning the distinction of degrees by that booke (for the better ordering of the Church in her ecclesiasticall policy) allowed to be amongst us the ministers of the Gospell, I must needs say and protest, though as seriously and diligently as I could, I have read and considered all that hath been written to or from, with or against, of that question for these thirtie years and more, and also of purpose for the same have searched all ancient writers and all monuments of antiquity, that I could come by, yet I could never find any thing of sound moment or force brought against the same: yea, (that more is,) besides hatred to Popery, and too great an admiration of some other churches, I never by all this could finde, that the impugners thereof, and the seekers in the steed thereof to bring in a government of the Church by a parity of ministers and their presbiteries, have indeed and truth any thing of sound moment, or of any weight at all to justifie or to countenance their so doing. Insomuch that before the late reformation of Geneva, for all the foresaid points, and search

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that I have used for this point, I could thereby give never finde any one church of Christ, as big as that of Geneva and the appurtenances thereof, any where, of at any time for the space of ten yeares, possest of that their kinde of government," &c. *Sparke's Persuasion to Unitie*, ch. 15. Stileman also brings forward Ball to testify that the Nonconformists allowed the use of our Liturgy; that they thought none of the faults objected against it were a sufficient ground to justify a separation from the communion of our Church, but condemned it, as schismatical. "For so," says he, "the same author telleth us: 'They have evermore condemned voluntary separation from the congregation and assemblies, or *negligent frequenting of those public prayers*: they have ordinarily used the Communion Book in their public administrations, and still maintained unity, peace, and love, with them, who in some particulars have been of another judgement.' All this (saith he) is so notoriously known, that it is waste labour to produce testimonies herein." Again, in the next chapter but one, we have these expressions: "To the praise of God be it spoken, our Liturgy, for purity and soundness, may compare with any liturgy used in the third and fourth ages of the Church. 'This I mention (saith he) that we might learn to acknowledge God's mercy, walk worthy of what we have received, and strive forward to perfection by all lawful means.' And lest any might object the corruption of the Church, much decayed and fallen in those ages from its first purity; he saith (but a little after) 'Neither can it be imagined that they might hold communion in other ordinances, but not in their stinted liturgies: for in those times, of all other parts, *the liturgies were most pure*. God of his endless mercies so providing for his Church and the comfort of his people in those hard and evil times; when the *doctrine* was miserably and dangerously corrupted, in respect of *merit of works*, invocation of saints, &c. The *liturgies* were long preserved pure and free; whereby the faithful might be present with more comfort and freedom of conscience." To which he citeth several testimonies of learned men, and closeth with this remarkable conclusion, which doth indeed speak a pious and peaceable

spirit; which I would therefore desire all our yet dissenting brethren seriously to ponder and consider: '*This one thing*,' (*viz.* the purity of the liturgies of the Church, notwithstanding the corruption of doctrine; and that *our liturgy* for purity and soundness may compare with the best of them;) '*This* (said he) *duly considered, would put an end to many scruples, and might serve to stop them, who, out of over-great heat and forwardness, are ready to except against the means of their own comfort; and to cast off what God offereth, because they cannot enjoy what they desire.*'" *Stileman's Peace Offering*, part ii. ch. 10. citing *Ball's Trial of the Grounds of Separation*.

NOTE CXVIII.

Where shall we find the necessity of unity more forcibly represented, than by Baxter in the following passage? "Union is not only an *accident of the Church*, but is part of its very *essence*, without which it can be *no Church*, and without which we can be *no members* of it: it is no kingdome, no city, no family, and so no church, which doth not consist of *united* members: as it is no house which consisteth not of united parts. And he is no member which is not *united* to the *whole*. It is the great cause of men's boldness in dividing ways, that they take *union* to be but some *laudable* accident, while it may be had; which yet in some cases we may be without: and think that separations are *tollerable* faults even when they are forced to confess them faults; but they do not consider that *unity* is necessary to the *being* of the *Church*, and to the *being* of our own Christianity. Remember also that our *union* is necessary to our *communion* with *Christ* and with his *Church*; and to all the blessings and benefits of such communion. (John xv. 1. Col. ii. 19.) The member that is cut off from the body hath no life, or nourishment from the head or from the body, but is dead: he that is out of the Church is without the teaching, the holy worship, the prayers, and the discipline of the Church, and is out of the way where the Spirit doth come, and out of the society which Christ is specially related to; for he is the Saviour of his

body; and if we leave his hospital, we cannot expect the presence and help of the physician: nor will he be a Pilot to them who forsake his ship; nor a Captain to them who separate from his army: out of this ark, there is nothing but a deluge; and no place of rest or safety for a soul." *Baxter's Cure of Church Divisions*, p. 67. To reconcile Baxter the advocate of unity, with Baxter the defender of Nonconformity, the leader of the separation, would not be so easy as to account for his inconsistencies. He had a double part to act; and when endeavouring to prevent the defection of the Independents from his own party, it is not surprising that he should sometimes contradict those arguments, by which he strove to justify the Presbyterian Nonconformists in their opposition to the Church.

NOTE CXIX.

The objections urged by the Puritans against the Church may be reduced to three: her use of a Liturgy, her Government, and her Discipline. Baxter has sufficiently answered the first, by teaching them, that every sect in the world has imposed a form of prayer upon its members; and that the extemporary prayer of a separatist is as truly a form to all the people, as if it had been written in a book. (*Cure of Ch. Divisions*, p. 179.) In defence of the lawfulness of *imposing* forms of prayer, he has appealed to the example of God himself in his dealings with the Jews; and to the conduct of our Saviour to his Apostles. (*Ibid.* p. 189.) And he has severely blamed those, who derided the Liturgy of the Church of England, as wicked men, distinguishable by their petulant and carnal zeal. (*Ibid.* p. 187, 188.) The intemperate censures, which his party were ready on all occasions to pass upon the form of our church government, cannot be better repelled than in the words of the same author: "We must not model the Church of Christ according to our private fancies: we are not the lords of it, nor are we fit or worthy to dispose of it." *Ibid.* p. 33, 34. His admonition therefore to such persons is, that they "should not take upon themselves to be wiser than God, and to build his house upon a better rule than his Gospel, and the primitive pattern, and

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man all by being wise in their own conceits, and by being righteous overmuch." *Ibid.* p. 36. And lastly, to those who would leave the Church, because, as they conceived, its discipline was not severe enough to coerce offenders, might have been applied his warning against the *religious pride of goodness*; which maketh new terms of church-communion, and teacheth men to make narrower the door of the Church than God hath made it: which causeth men to deny and villify God's grace, in those that answer not their expectations: and to think that the Church is not worthy of their communion: and to think that none are fit as they, to be the Reformers of the Church and of the world." *Ibid.* p. 20, 21.

NOTE CXX.

In addition to the evidence already produced upon this subject, the following may be added; which is the more important, as it is not the opinion of a private individual, but the deliberate judgment of a representative body, the Provincial Assembly of London." "They that hear men not lawfully called, have no promise of a blessing, but rather a threatening that they shall not profit by such preachers, as we have formerly proved. Hence it is that such hearers run from one errour to another, as a just punishment of God upon them, according to the saying of the Apostle, 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap unto themselves teachers, having itching ears.* They shall make teacher upon teacher, they shall *heap up teachers*, and these teachers shall be sent by themselves, and not by God; and *after their own lusts*, not after the divine rule, for so saith the text, *they shall after their own lusts heap to themselves, &c.* And the reason why they do this, is not because they have more judicious eares then other people, or because they are more holy, but *because they have itching eares.* But mark the curse that attends all such, v. 4. *They shall turn away their eares from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*" *Jus Divinum Ministerii Evangelici*, part ii. Preface. London. 1654,

NOTE CXXI.

"We protest before the Almightie God, that we acknowledge the churches of England (as they be established by publique authoritie) to be true, visible churches of Christ; that we desire the continuance of our ministry in them, above all earthly things; as that without which our whole life would be wearisome and bitter unto us. That we dislike not a set forme of prayer to be used in our churches. Finally, whatsoever followeth is not set down of an evill minde, to deprave the Book of Common Prayer, Ordination, or Homilies; but onely to shew some reasons, why we cannot subscribe to all things contayned in the same Booke." *Defence of the Ministers' Reasons for Refusal of Subscription*, &c. p. i. ch. i. 1607.

NOTE CXXII.

Fox bears testimony to the care and deliberation with which the Book of Common Prayer was originally framed, in the time of Edward VIth. "The King and his counsell," says he, "did appoint the Archbishop of Canterbury, with certain of the best learned and discreet Bishops and other learned men, diligently to consider and ponder the premises: and thereupon having as well an eye and respect unto the most sincere and pure Christian religion taught by the holy Scriptures, as also to the usages of the primitive Church, to draw and make one convenient and meet order, rite, and fashion of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments, to be had and used within this realme of England and the dominions of the same. Who after many godly and learned conferences, through the aid of the Holy Ghost, with one uniform agreement, did conclude, set forth, and deliver unto the King's highness a booke in English entitled, 'A Booke of the Common Prayer,' &c." *Foxe's Acts and Monuments*, vol. ii. p. 1301. Edit. 1583.

NOTE CXXIII.

The commission indeed was granted for this specific purpose, and the commissioners had no authority to

enter upon the discussion of any other subject; as will appear from the following extract. "Whereas by our declaration of the twenty fifth of October last, concerning ecclesiastical affairs, we did (amongst other things) express our esteem of the Liturgy of the Church of England, contained in the Book of Common Prayer; and yet since we find exceptions made against several things therein, we did by our said declaration declare, we would appoint an equal number of learned divines, of both persuasions, to review the same: we therefore, in accomplishment of our said will and intent, and of our continued and constant care and study for the peace and unity of the churches within our dominions; and for the removal of all exceptions and differences, and the occasion of all such differences and exceptions, from among our good subjects, for or concerning the said Book of Common Prayer, or any thing therein contained, do by these our letters patent require, authorize, constitute, and appoint you the said, &c. to advise upon and review the said Book of Common Prayer, comparing the same with the most ancient liturgies which have been used in the Church in the primitive and purest times," &c. *Commission for the Conference at the Savoy.* See *Collier's Ecclesiastical History*, vol. ii. b. 9. p. 877.

NOTE CXXIV.

The original proposals presented to the King by the Presbyterian ministers declare, that "upon just reasons they dissented from the ecclesiastical hierarchy or prelacy disclaimed in the Covenant." (*Two Papers of Proposals*, p. 5.) And in the second paper they say: "Though we have professed our willingnesse to submit to the *primitive episcopacy* and *reformed liturgie*, hoping it may prove an expedient to a happy union; yet we have expressed our dislike of the *prelacy* and present liturgie, while unreformed." (*Ibid.* p. 14.) In the papers which passed between the commissioners during the conference, the Presbyterian divines hold a similar language. "The humblest purest subjects may stumble upon the scruple, whether bishops differ not from presbyters only in degree, and not in order or office."

"And they may scruple whether such stations, themselves the governours of their brethren, make them selves indeed of a different order or office, and encroach not on the authority of Christ, who only makes officers purely ecclesiastical; and whether it be no disloyalty to Christ to own such officers." See *Account of all the Proceedings*, &c. 1661. Pepys that passed p. 11.

NOTE CXXV.

In proof of this, a single instance of Baxter's mode of conducting the disputation may perhaps suffice. It shall be given from Calamy's Life, lest it should be supposed to have been exaggerated by his enemies. In the other part of the dispute, when the episcopal divines were the opponents, they brought an argument of which this was the major proposition. *That command which commandeth only an act in itself lawful*, is not sinful. This Mr. Baxter denied. The opponents backed it with another syllogism, of which this was the major. *That command which commandeth an act in itself lawful, and no other act or circumstance unlawful, is not sinful.* This also Mr. Baxter denied; giving this double reason: 'Both because that may be accidentally a sin which is not so in itself, and may be unlawfully commanded, though that accident be not in the command: and also because it may be commanded under an unjust penalty.' The opponents therefore urged further thus: 'That command which commandeth an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby any unjust penalty is enjoined, nor any circumstance whence directly or per *accidens*, any sin is consequent, which the commander ought to provide against, is not sinful.' Mr. Baxter still persisted in his denial, and gave this reason: 'Because the first act commanded may be accidentally unlawful, and be commanded by an unjust penalty, though no other act or circumstance be such.' The opponents therefore once more advanced this proposition: 'That command which commandeth an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby any unjust penalty is enjoined, nor any circumstance whence directly, or *per accidens*, any sin is consequent, which the commander

ought to provide against, hath in it all things requisite to the lawfulness of a command, and particularly cannot be guilty of commanding an act *per accidens* unlawfully, nor of commanding an act under an unjust penalty. Which proposition also he denied for the foregoing reasons: intimating that such a command hath not necessarily all things in it requisite to the lawfulness of a command; because though no other act be commanded, whereby an unjust penalty is enjoyned, yet still the first act may be commanded under an unjust penalty: and though no other act or circumstance be commanded, that is a *sin per accidens*, yet the first itself commanded, may be a *sin per accidens*. It may be *sinful privatively*, by omission of some thing necessary, some mode or circumstance. It may sinfully *restrain*, though it sinfully command not. It may be sinful *in modo*, commanding that *universally* or *indefinitely*, *particularly* or *singularly*, that should be otherwise; though in the circumstances (properly so called) of the act, nothing were commanded that is sinful. 'This repeated denial,' says Calamy, 'put them so hard to it, that they could proceed no further.' *Calamy's Life of Baxter*, vol. i. ch. 8. Probably they saw the uselessness of proceeding further, with persons so disposed to cavil.

NOTE CXXVI.

On this subject South has the following just observation. "The admission of this plea" (viz. a tender conscience) "absolutely binds the hands of the magistrate, and subjects him to the conscience of those, whose duty it is to be subject to him. For let the civil power make what laws it will, if conscience shall come and put in its exception against them, it must be heard, and exempt the person who makes the exception from the binding power of those laws. For since conscience commands in the name of God, the issue of the question must be whether God or the magistrate is to be obeyed, and then the decision is like to be very easy." *South's Sermons*, vol. iii. Serm. V.

NOTE CXXVII.

South, in the sermon above cited, discussing the passage 1 Cor. viii. which is in many respects parallel to the one under consideration, is clearly of opinion, that "the principal design of the Apostle extends not beyond *private persons*; but directly proposes rules only for the charitable and inoffensive deportment of one *private person* towards another." He observes also, that "it must needs be confessed by all, that a *weak conscience* in the Apostle's sense is an imperfection, and consequently ought by all means to be removed, or laid down. For as certainly as growth and proficiency in knowledge under the means of grace is a duty, so certainly it is a duty not to persist in this weakness of conscience, which has its foundation only in the defect of such knowledge."—"And it were worth the while," continues he, "in our contest with the pretenders to *weak* or *tender consciences* amongst us, to enquire of them how long they think it fit for them to continue *weak?* And whether they look upon their *weakness* and *ignorance* as their freehold, and as that which they resolve to keep for term of life; and to live and die *babes* in the knowledge of the religion they profess, to grow up into *childhood*, and at length go out of the world *infants* and *weaklings* of *threescore* or *fourscore years old?* This certainly they must intend; for so far are they from looking upon that *weakness or tenderness* of *conscience*, which they plead, as an imperfection, and consequently to be outgrown or removed by them, that they own it as a badge of a more *refined* and *advanced piety*, and of such a growth and attainment in the ways of God, that they look down upon all others as Christians of a lower form, as *moral* men, and ignorant of the mystery of the Gospel: words which I have often heard from these impostors, and which infallibly shew that the persons whom St. Paul dealt with, and those whom we contend with, are not the same kind of men; forasmuch as they own not the same duty. But that (it seems) which was the infancy and defect of those persons must pass for the perfection, and is really the design of these." *South, ut supra.* South was well ac-

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quainted with the character of those whom he described: he had lived among them, and been a witness of their conduct; and the caustic severity of his remarks must be allowed to be justified by the history of those days of rebellion and hypocrisy. Another writer of the same period, of less celebrity, but great strength of intellect and shrewdness of observation, in a very scarce tract, has made the following remarks on the subject before me. "Here by the way, give me leave to note thus much concerning Christian *liberty* and *weakness*. They were in those days things *inconsistent*, and in such *opposition*, that they did ever mutually expell each other. But now they are become *termini convertibiles*, and of so near a *relation*, that this *weakness* is made the *exegesis* or *explication* of that *liberty*. Those which were well acquainted with the nature of this happy *freedome*, that knew from what *thraldome* Christ had vindicated, and unto what glorious *prerogatives* he had restored them, those were never [a] *scandalized* at the use or omission of any thing *indifferent*, they were not apt to take, though they might unadvisedly stretch the line of their liberty (beyond that which was expedient) and give offence to others, as it appeares, (1 Cor. viii. 7, 9. unto the end, and in other places.) [b] This infirmity in those days proceeded from want of knowledge. Ignorance (I confesse) was the mother of that fraile devotion. But now Christian liberty is become the *mother*, and knowledge the very *midwife* to this weakness. And they that would be the most knowing, think that they cannot maintaine the great *charter* of *priviledges*, which Christ hath left us, unlesse they pretend to be wheeled with the *bias* of a weak and tender conscience. We have a saying, that if a *horse* knewe his own strength, he would never be tamed: I am sure to make the knowledge of our Christian liberty as meanes to abuse it, is too much to resemble the *horse*

[a] Non enim offendentur si fortes fuerint. Peter Martyr. loc. commun. class iii. c. 5. s. 6.

[b] Rom. xiv. per totum.

[c] Consequitur eum abuti Christianæ libertatis beneficio, qui vel suis magistratibus vel præpositis vis sponte non paret in Domino. *Brta, Eccles. ut. ad perp. Eccles. in Anglia Primo.* Pii autem hominis est cogitare

and *mule*, that have no understanding, whose mouth must be held with bit and bridle. I confesse, I cannot think that the things which God hath left indifferent to us, can (though armed with man's authority) shed a perpendicular influence into our consciences, neither can I like to have them urged under an *anathema*, as if their omission were a demerit in God's construction, that makes us liable to damnation. Yet I know the Church hath a power (which is not to be contemned) to appoint such things as tend to the outward *decent* and *orderly* frame of policie. 'Tis the Apostle's charge, Gal. v. 1. *Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.* But Christ hath not purchased our immunity from every ordinance of man; they are still in force, and therefore wee must submit for the Lord's sake; (1 Pet. ii. 18.) And if so in things civill, why not in things appointed for the advancement of the Lord's glory? No man doubts of the magistrate's power to enjoine a fast, (except those by whom magistracy itself is denied;) and a fast is *cultus divini adminiculum*, an appendix, yea an assistance to God's worship, and why may not other helps to devotion (as forms of prayer are) be imposed upon us? That religion which allows them to be enjoined, commands them to be observed. If we were to take the character of those weak ones (in the New Testament) which are fenced in with a hedge of apostolicall precepts, lest they should be wounded with scandall about things indifferent; we should find no indulgence given, none demanded, for an omission or relaxation, for the freedome to use or not to use things prescribed, for order, for decency, for edification in the Christian Church. Their weakness inclined them to the other hand of supererogation, if I may so call the practice of that ceremoniall law which was dead and buried with our Saviour. Their weakness was that they desired still to walk in a vaine shadow, and therefore vaine, because now the sun himselfe had appeared in his meridian brightnesse. These were those that are borne up by the hands of the Apostles, lest

sibi liberam in rebus externis potestatem ideo esse concessam quo fit ad omnia charitatis officia expeditior. *Calvin. Instit.* lib. iii. c. 19. s. 29.

they should dash their foot against any stone, as scandalum it appeareth in the quotations in the margin. In other cases the Apostles condemne the abuse of Christian liberty, as a turning of that grace of God into lasciviousnesse, as was before observed. A conscience truly weak and scrupulous, after an humble and diligent search for a satisfactory information, may challenge our charitable and Christian condescension; but there's no yoke of bondage that doth so much intangle us as the wilful and froward obstinacy of an intemperate humour." *Benton Oile for the Lamps of the Sanctuarie by L. Womacke*, p. 12, 164[illegible].

These who wish further to investigate the meaning of the Apostle in the above cited passages, may consult to advantage Thorndike's *Discourse of the Forbearance or the Penalties which a due Reformation requires*, ch. 10, 11. London 1670.

NOTE CXXVIII.

"There are four things," says the London Provincial Assembly, "that justly deserve to be abhorred by all good Christians.

1. An *universal toleration* of all religions.

2. An *universal admittance* of all men to the *Lord's Supper*.

3. *Universal grace*, that is, that Christ died equally for all, and that all men have free will to be saved.

4. *Universal allowance* of all that suppose themselves *gifted to preach* without *ordination*." *Jus Divinum Ministerii evangelici*, part. i. pag. 192.

That by the toleration of all religions, which these divines so vehemently disclaimed, they chiefly meant all other Christian persuasions except their own, we may gather from their conduct to those who adhered to the liturgy and government of the Church. There was, as South observes, when they were in power, no toleration allowed for the Liturgy and established worship of the Church of England, though the users of it pleaded conscience never so much for its use, and the known

[d] Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii. 9. Gal. v. 13. Acts xv. 20, 24, 28, 29. Acts xvi. 3. Acts xxiii. 12.

laws of God and man, for the rule of that their conscience. But these zealots were above that legal ordinance *of doing as they would be done by*; nor were their consciences any longer spiritually weak, when their interest was once grown temporally strong. And then notwithstanding all their pleas of tenderness, and outcries against *persecution*, whoever came under them, and closed not with them, found them to be men whose *bowels* were brass, and whose *hearts* were as hard as their *foreheads*." *South, ut supra*, vol. iii. Serm. V.

SERMON VII.

NOTE CXXIX.

THERE is a passage in St. Luke's Gospel, which seems at first sight not easily to be reconciled with this application of the text. He informs us, that, on a certain occasion, St. John said unto our Lord; "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us:" and that "Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." (Luke ix. 49, 50.) This injunction, separately considered, may appear to give a sanction even to irregular attempts to promote the influence of Christianity; and to teach, that unity of design, rather than of operation, was required by our Saviour of the labourers in his vineyard. As however this can scarcely be admitted to have been his meaning, without implying, that his judgment upon a particular case was calculated to make void the obligations of his general precepts; and as we have already seen, that the Apostles, in framing the constitution of the Church, acted in conformity to the spirit of these precepts, guarding, as far as it was possible, against all intrusion upon their sacred function, by those who were not regularly appointed to execute it; we shall not hastily acquiesce in such a comment.

It is an acknowledged rule in divinity, that no part of Scripture may be so explained as to contradict another. And when two precepts, equally plain in their language, seem to imply a contradiction, the difficulty can only be solved by a reference to the context of both, and by a due consideration of the circumstances under which they were delivered.

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We are led then to inquire, whether there were not some particularities in the case of him whose labours St. John would have forbidden, which should prevent its being drawn into a precedent, or used to defend the conduct of those to whom the text has been considered to be applicable. The Evangelist does not tell us who this person was, or enable us to account for his not following with the disciples of the blessed Jesus, although he believed in his name; but he mentions one thing concerning him, which entirely separates his case from that of those who may be inclined to shelter their irregular zeal under his example. He performed miracles in the name of Jesus; and these miracles, as they directly tended to the overthrow of the kingdom of Satan, could only have been worked under divine authority and by divine assistance. "Master," saith St. John, "we saw one casting out devils in thy name." It was for this reason, as St. Mark informs us, (Mark ix. 38, 39.) that our Saviour himself rebuked the zeal which would have checked this man's exertions. "Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me." This was the test of his commission: though not of the company of the disciples, he was a partaker of their faith, and a fellow labourer with them in the same pious work; and our Saviour himself had given the most convincing proof, that he approved of his conduct, by permitting him to cast out devils in his name.

The two passages therefore, which, on a hasty perusal, may perhaps, from the cast of their language, appear to be opposed to each other, when carefully examined, will be found to be in no respect discordant. The answer of our Saviour recorded in St. Luke's Gospel contains a particular injunction, issued to suit a temporary purpose and an extraordinary occasion; applicable to him alone, to whose conduct it originally referred, and in whose case there were circumstances so peculiar and extraordinary, as to make it an evident exception to every general rule of discipline which the Scriptures contain. If however this case should be urged to prove, that the strict laws of discipline may on-

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some occasions be dispensed with; it may be answered, that it would ill become us to maintain that God has so irrevocably bound himself by his own ordinances, that, on no occasion, and under no circumstances, he can deviate from them: but still we may reasonably require the same evidence of his having sanctioned the deviation, as originally shewed that he had established the rule. The Apostles, in the exercise of their ministry, settled the government of the Church; and the miracles they did were a sufficient testimony, that they acted under divine authority. If any new teacher should arise, and assume a right to speak in the name of God, independent of that regular appointment received from them through their successors; it may be reasonably expected, that he produce the same evidence that God is with him, which they did. If he can work a miracle in the name of Christ, his commission will be as undoubted, as if received through the regular channel; but until his call be thus attested, we cannot be justified in expecting any real or permanent advantage from his labours.

It may probably be argued in favour of irregular exertions, that St. Paul himself rejoiced in the ministry of those who "preached Christ," even though they did it "of contention, and not sincerely;" being convinced that good must be done by any attempts to propagate and extend the dominion of Christianity. The language however of this great Apostle will not perhaps, upon investigation, be found to favour the cause of those, whom, in this case, it would be quoted to serve; even though it should lead us to believe, that some benefit may possibly result from a preaching, so little praiseworthy as that to which he alludes. "Some," says he, "preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good-will; the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: but the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the Gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice." (Phil. i. 15.) Before this passage can bear upon the question before us, it should be made clearly

to appear; first, that the envy, strife, and contention, spoken of by the Apostle, relate to a departure from the established order and discipline of the Church; secondly, that by rejoicing in such preaching, he shewed his approbation of the conduct of the preachers; and thirdly, that he admitted the benefits resulting from their ministry to be so great, as to counterbalance the evil of the spirit by which they were actuated.

1. It is however the opinion of learned commentators on this passage, that by the envy and strife which the Apostle attributes to these preachers, he alludes solely to their personal enmity to him; (see Wolfii cur. Philolog. Grotii. Annot.) that he means not to accuse them of having intruded into this sacred office, in opposition to the established laws of the Church; but of having exercised the power, which had been regularly imparted to them, rather in a spirit of hostility to him, (see Whitby *ad locum*,) than with a sincere wish of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel. And this interpretation is certainly favoured by his assertion, that they "preached Christ in pretence, and not in truth;" and that they were not "sincere" in their labours; but supposed that by them, they should "add affliction to his bonds." Should this be allowed to be the true meaning of the Apostle's words, it may be difficult to conceive that any argument can be drawn from them, in favour of their labours, who are unhappily divided against the Church.

2. But even on the supposition that the contentious persons of whom the Apostle speaks were in similar circumstances with those of the present day, who have unhappily separated themselves from their brethren; may we not ask, how does the Apostle countenance their separation? He rejoices indeed, "in that Christ was preached by them," though from improper motives; but does he therefore teach, that it is lawful to do evil that good may come? Even while he expresses his joy at the *effect* of their preaching, he hesitates not to condemn them as contentious, as envious, as insincere.

3. Nor can we suppose that the Apostle, the great preacher of unity, the constant advocate for order, the strict asserter of discipline, could have rejoiced in the ministry of such unauthorized labourers; however

some temporary benefits might appear to result from it. He who declared, that "they who caused divisions or offences served not our Lord Jesus Christ," (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.) never would have approved of those, who, while they preached the Gospel of Christ, could not but have encouraged a spirit of rebellion against his authority. That motives of personal enmity would have had no weight with him we may well imagine; that he would rejoice in the successful exertions of those, who, though his fellow-labourers, bore him no good-will, we cannot doubt: but that he could have felt pleasure in contemplating the acts of those preachers, whose envy and strife were directed, not against himself, but against the government of that Church which he had been so earnestly employed in constituting, the whole tenour of his doctrine and his conduct forbids us to allow. Vain then must be every attempt to elicit from the language of this great master-builder any approbation of those, who would divide the house which he had contributed to raise; on the contrary, acting as one fully sensible of the meaning and the necessity of the caution conveyed in the text, he taught us plainly and decidedly "to mark those who caused divisions, and to avoid them;" (Rom. xvi. 17.) Before I quit the subject of the text, I would willingly call the observation of the reader to a paraphrase of the passage by Zuinglius, as cited by Meisner in his review of a celebrated scheme of pacification, which will be noticed in its proper place. "Non possum hic" (says Meisner) "quin Zuinglii verba adducam, quæ a Marlorato ad eum locum recensentur: medium non reliquit Christus, inquit, aut colligere oportet cum eo, aut dispergere cum Satana. Ergo videtur simul his verbis hypocritas quosdam allocutus, qui eum esse Messiam dissimulabant, quasi dicat, Multi inter vos qui omnia dissimulant, neutri parti adhærentes. Sed si vere essetis discipuli mei, si vere crederetis mihi, adjungeretis vos plebi et confitemini, me virtute Dei ejecisse dæmonium, ageretisque pro tam immenso beneficio gratias Deo. Cum hoc nolitis, deberetis vos palam adjunxisse alteri parti, quæ factum meum calumniatur, et dæmoni ascribit. At quia dissimulatis, certissimum signum est,

vos mecum non esse, nec mecum colligere, sed dispergere potius, adhæretis calumniantibus me, utcunque dissimuletis.' 'Observent ista,' pergit, 'qui hodie neutri parti addicti sunt, nihilque religionem Christi, et veritatem evangelicam curant, quorum magnus est numerus.'" *Meisner. Irenicum Duræanum*, p. 424.

NOTE CXXX.

The law of the Six Articles (see Note XCIII.) was framed in this spirit; and is a proof that, even where the temporal supremacy of the Roman Pontiff had been renounced, the same mode of enforcing submission to the peculiar doctrines which the Roman Church had taught, was carefully adhered to by the advocates of its superstition. "In this parliament, synode, or convocation," says Fox, "certaine articles, matters, and questions, touching religion, were decreed by certaine prelates, to the number especiallie of six, commonly called the Six Articles, to be had and received among the king's subjects, *in pretence of unitie*. But what unitie thereof followed, the groaning hearts of a great number, and also the cruell death of divers, both in the daies of King Henrie and of Queene Mary, can no tell declare, as I pray God, never the like be felt hereafter." *Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 470.

NOTE CXXXI.

The almost prophetic language of the venerable Latimer, when the kindled faget was placed at the feet of his fellow sufferer, should ever be remembered. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." That expectation, which contributed to support these holy men under the fiery trial which awaited them, has, by God's blessing, been fully accomplished. But their example began to produce its effect sooner than they could have imagined. For even at the moment, when, with true Christian heroism, they were strengthening themselves under torments, by the hope that the pure religion of Christ would flourish by their death, that heroism was working its effect, in one of the spectators

of their martyrdom. Julius Palmer, an ingenious young man, and Fellow of Magdalen College in Oxford, had been through King Edward's reign a warm and zealous Papist; and now attended the execution of Ridley and Latimer, with an anxious desire to discover something in their behaviour, which might justify him in believing that they were not sincere in their profession; or that they were obstinate enthusiasts, not real martyrs for the truth. "But he rose," says their biographer, a convert from their blood; and went away publickly exclaiming against the tyranny and cruelty of his old allies. And having suffered loss of fortune for his intemperate zeal in Popery under King Edward, was now so convinced of his error, as boldly to suffer martyrdom for Protestantism under Queen Mary." See *Wordsworth, Eccles. Biog.* vol. iii. p. 422. where this interesting anecdote is related with a pathos and simplicity which cannot fail to impress it upon the reader.

NOTE CXXXII.

The language of Cassander on this subject, as well as throughout the treatise, is guarded and moderate. But he unequivocally maintains the supremacy of the Pope, if it rested upon the indisputable testimony of all antiquity. "Quod autem ad unitatem hujus externæ Ecclesiæ requirunt obedientiam unius summi rectoris, qui Petrum in regenda Christi Ecclesia, et ejus ovibus pascendis successerit, non est a consensu priscæ utique Ecclesiæ alienum." He allows indeed, that the power which the Popes had possessed, had been abused; and to this abuse alone he attributes the resistance it had met with, and the controversies which had been raised concerning its legality. "Neque unquam credo controversia apud nos ea de re extitisset, nisi Pontifices Romani hac auctoritate ad dominationis quandam speciem abusi fuissent, eamque extra fines a Christo, et Ecclesia præscriptos ambitionis et cupiditatis causa extulissent." Still however he asserts its necessity; and seems to think, that no real friend of Christian concord can object to it. "Qui Christianæ unitati obstabilis erunt, et animo ad omnia contentionis materia arripienda considerarint, libenter

ad Ecclesiæ unitatem et pacem conservandam eam potestatem agnoscent, quam illi perpetuus Ecclesiæ consensus tribuit." *Cassandri Consult.* art. 7. *Grotii Op.* tom. iii.

NOTE CXXXIII.

The treatise of Bossuet, as translated, bore this title: "An Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church in Matters of Controversie, by the Right Rev. James Benigne Bossuet, &c. &c.; done into English from the fifth edition in French. London, 1685." The object of the author was so to soften down and explain away the leading articles of Popery, as to allure unwary Protestants into that communion, by persuading them that the ground of the Reformation was wholly laid in misconception and misrepresentation; and that those tenets of the Romanists, which were generally represented as most obnoxious, were either not held by them, or held in such a sense as to involve none of the errors with which they had been charged. This subtle design Archbp. Wake fully disclosed in "An Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England in the several Articles proposed by M. de Meaux, late Bp. of Condom, in his Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church; to which is prefixed a particular account of M. de Meaux's book. London. 1686." This account contains the history of the first edition of the work; which was suppressed by Bossuet, in consequence of the opposition he experienced from the doctors of the Sorbonne; who, instead of approving of it, "marked several of the most considerable parts of it, wherein the Exposition, instead of palliating, had absolutely perverted the doctrine of their Church." To prevent the scandal which such a censure might have caused, "the several places which had been marked were changed; and at the end of the same year a new edition, much altered, was exposed as the first impression of the work." Even in this state however it never received the approbation of the Sorbonne in form; nor could it obtain that of the Pope, "until after eight years' powerful solicitation, when his Holiness was at last convinced, that it was a scheme artfully contrived to support the Ca-

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tholic cause, and to reconcile the Protestants to it in France." See *Tottie's Charge*, printed with a volume of Sermons. Oxon. 1775. Wake, however, having procured a copy of the suppressed edition, compared it with that which was published, and was enabled to prove, in opposition to the assertion of Bossuet, that it was not so improbable as he had represented it, "that a bishop of the Church of Rome should either be not sufficiently instructed in his religion, to know what is the doctrine of it; or not sufficiently sincere, to represent it without disguise." He then examines the altered passages, and shews that they do not come up to the doctrine of the Romish Church, though their language is much stronger than that of the original copy. And in order to prove, that, to uphold their cause, the Roman Church writers have not scrupled publicly to hold doctrines themselves, and to approve them when held by others, which their Church really condemns; he brings forward evidence, that some of the dignified persons, who had sanctioned the Exposition of Bossuet, had at other times published opinions directly contrary to that which it maintains. He then declares the object of his own Treatise thus; "Having by a long converse among the Papists of our own and other countries perceived, that, either by the ignorance or malice of their instructors, they have generally very false and imperfect notions of our opinions, in the matters in controversy between us; I have suffered myself to be persuaded to pursue the method of M. de Meaux's Exposition, as to the doctrine of the Church of England; and oppose sincerely, to what he pretends is the opinion of the Roman Church, that form of faith that is openly professed, and taught without any disguise or dissimulation among us." (See Preface.) This he does, following Bossuet article by article; stating the doctrine of the Church of England, exposing his attempts to palliate the Romish errors, and shewing by an appeal to her authorized forms, and the writings of her most celebrated defenders, what are the opinions really held by the Church of Rome. This treatise having called forth "A Vindication of the Bishop of Condom's Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic

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Church, in Answer to a Book entitled an Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, &c. with a Letter to the said Bishop. London. 1686;" Wake replied to it, in "A Defence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England against the Exceptions of M. de Meaux, late Bishop of Condom, and his Vindicator. London. 1686." In this latter work, he enters more at length into the subject; fully substantiating his former statements; and proving, by citations from councils and authors of repute, that he had been justified in his condemnation of Bossuet's work, as a sophistical palliation of the Romish doctrine, intended to delude unwary Protestants. In the conclusion of the tract, he draws a comparative view of old Popery and new Popery; the former taken from authentic documents, the latter from the Exposition of the Bp. of Meaux; thus shewing that he has prevaricated in his account of the doctrine held by his Church on the articles of religious Worship; Invocation of Saints; Worship of Images, Reliques; Justification; Merits; Satisfactions; Indulgencies; the Mass; and the Pope's Authority. The opinion of this celebrated work of Bossuet, which the able Exposition of Abp. Wake has enabled the English reader to form, coincides in all respects with the judgment passed upon it by learned Protestant writers in foreign countries, as will sufficiently appear from the following extract.

"Nostris vero temporibus imprimis candor iste fuit desideratus, et merito desideratus in celebri illa *Expositione fidei Catholicæ*, quæ omnibus in manu est, a doctissimo et ingeniosissimo Ecclesiæ Romanæ episcopo adornata. Vah, quam teguntur, velantur, extenuantur, emolliuntur, pinguntur hic omnia! quam caute, dissimulantur, quam celeriter prætereuntur, si quæ fucum non admittunt! diceres auctorem hac in re salubre Horatii sequi consilium, suo Poetæ, quam instruit suadentis, ut, quæ

"Desperat tractata nitescere posse, relinquat;

"Diceres, religionem Ecclesiæ Romanæ in hunc usque diem prorsus fuisse ignotam. Cæcutivisse reformatores nostros, cum sibi in ea conspexisse visi sunt aliquam vel minimam secedendi causam. Errasse ipsos Patres

Concilii Tridentini, qui tot anathemata vibrarunt in quos? In homines secum in omnibus consentientes. Sed tegat ingeniosissimus auctor, quantalibet arte defectus Ecclesiæ suæ; neminem fallet, neque quenquam hactenus fefellit, nisi falli voluerit, et inanem Apostasiæ prætextum quæsiverit." —— "Equidem quod ad nos attinet, nihil aptius est, ad nos in veritate confirmandos, atque elegantissimus iste liber. Hoc lecto non amplius dubitare possumus, nostram religionem esse veram, cæterisque omnibus præstare. Videmus enim, excellentissimos præsules Ecclesiæ Romanæ, cum suam religionem orbi commendare volunt, huic habitum nostræ religionis induere. Recte igitur credidimus hactenus: ipsi enim adversarii nostri, cum videri volunt sanam habere fidem, volunt videri credere, quod nos credimus. Quare non est, quod nos fidei nostræ pœniteat. Retineamus tantummodo depositum nostrum, et videamus ne quisquam hoc nobis eripiat; neve illi, qui simulant, se eadem nobiscum velle incedere via, nos incautos secum in avia abducant." *Werenfelsii Opuscula*, vol. i. p. 330. Edit. Lugd. Bat. 1772.

NOTE CXXXIV.

The justice of these remarks will probably be admitted by every attentive reader of the Annotations of Grotius upon the Consultation of Cassander. Particular reference may be made to his observations on the seventh article of the Consultation, (*Grotii Opera*, tom. iii. p. 617. Edit. London. 1679;) to his animadversions on the remarks of Rivet on the same article, (p. 641;) to his note "De Auctoritate Traditionum," (p. 628;) and his animadversions on the remarks of Rivet on the same subject, (p. 647;) and to his endeavour to free the Roman Church from the charge of idolatry, in his animadversions on the remarks of Rivet respecting the twentieth article of the Consultation, (p. 644.)

NOTE CXXXV.

For particular information respecting this transaction, the reader is referred to Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. vi. Appendix 4. Edit. 1811. From the narrative which it contains, and the authentic papers sub-

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joined to it, viz. the correspondence of the Abp. with Mr. Beauvoir, Chaplain to the Earl of Stair, than at Paris; Drs. Du Pin, and Piers Girardin; "it will appear, with the utmost evidence, 1st, That Abp. Wake was not the *first mover* in this correspondence, nor the person that *formed the project of union* between the English and Gallican Churches. 2dly. That he never made any concessions, nor offered to give up, for the sake of peace, any one point of the established doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, in order to promote this union. 3dly. That any desires of union with the Church of Rome, expressed in the Archbishop's letters, proceeded from the hopes (well founded or illusory it is not my business to examine here) that he at first entertained of a considerable reformation in that Church, and from an expectation that its most absurd doctrines would fall to the ground, if they could once be deprived of their great support, the Papal authority;—the destruction of which authority was the very basis of this correspondence." *Mosheim's Hist. ut sup.* vol. vi. p. 141. The following citations from the correspondence above alluded to will sufficiently prove, that the Abp. was not prepared to surrender the smallest portion of the truth of Christianity, or of the independence of the English Church. In his letter to Mr. Beauvoir, marked No. 3, in the Collection, he writes; "I cannot tell what to say to Dr. Du Pin. If he thinks we are to take their direction what to retain and what to give up, he is utterly mistaken. *I am a friend to peace, but more to truth.* And they may depend upon it, I shall always account our Church to stand upon an equal foot with theirs; and that we are no more to receive laws from them, than we desire to impose any upon them. In short, the Church of England is free, is orthodox: she has a plenary authority within herself, and has no need to recur to any other church to direct her what to retain, or what to do. Nor will we, otherwise than in a brotherly way, and in full equality of right and power, ever consent to have any treaty with that of France. And therefore, if they mean to deal with us, they must lay down this for the foundation, that we are to deal with one another upon equal terms. If, consistently with

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our own establishment, we can agree upon a closer union with one another, well; if not, we are as much, and upon as good grounds, a free independent Church, as they are. And for myself, as Archbishop of Canterbury, I have more power, larger privileges, and a greater authority, than any of their Archbishops: from which, by the grace of God, I will not depart—no, not for the sake of an union with them." Again; "I have no design but what is consistent with the honour and freedom of our English Church, and with the security of that true and sound doctrine which is taught in it, and from which no consideration shall ever make me depart."

To Dr. Pius Girardin he wrote thus plainly his opinion respecting the primacy of the Papal see, (No. 6. of the Letters,) refusing to give the Roman Pontiff more than an empty title of honour; a title which, it appears from a former letter, (No. 5. to Dr. Du Pin,) he was only willing to cede as a compliment to an episcopal throne fixed in a city which had once been the seat of empire.

"Nullam unquam vobis stabilem inter vos pacem, aut catholicam cum aliis unionem, haberi posse, dum aliquid ultra merum honoris primatum hac ætate Pontifici Romano tribuitis. Hoc nos per aliquot sæcula experti sumus; vos jam sentire debetis," &c.

The following citation from the same letter will shew, that he was as firm in his declarations to his French correspondents as to Mr. Beauvoir, of his unalterable determination not to sacrifice the truth for the sake of peace. "In eo te nunquam falli patiar, quod me pacis ecclesiasticæ amantissimum credas; *omniaque illi consequendæ danda putem, præter veritatem.*"

NOTE CXXXVI.

"Maximum autem sententiarum divortium inde est, quod alterutra pars putat alteram nonnullis divinis attributis nimis, mio tantum tribuere, ut reliquis Dei perfectionibus non satis consulatur. Reformati nimirum Augustanæ Confessionis doctoribus ab idea entis perfectissimi ita incipere videntur, ut tantum divinæ independentiæ, summo Dei dominio ac justitiæ ejus tribuant, ut illius bonitati ac misericordiæ non satis imo parum

consulant. Contra vero reformati existimant, tantum Fratres Augustanæ Confessionis misericordiæ ac bonitati divinæ tribuere, ut non satis rationem habeant non modo infiniti Dei intellectus, sed illimitatæ illius independentiæ, et summæ justitiæ ac sapientiæ: putant reformati doctores, Deum omnium suorum attributorum in decreto suo ac universi productione simul rationem habuisse. Doctores vero Augustanæ Confessionis putare videntur, Deum primario bonitatis ac misericordiæ suæ extra se communicandæ rationem gessisse, et his primariis de Deo conceptionibus insistendum esse putant, ad quos cætera omnia revocanda sunt."——"Ab utraque parte in hoc maxime peccatur, quod consequentias sibi invicem ceu veras sententias imputant, licet altera pars a consequentia se abhorrere testetur, ab ea animum gerat alienum, eam quibusdam distinctionibus eludat. Pars utraque consequentias, quas alteri parti tribuit, pejores esse clamat, illique majori jure imputari posse putat. Doctor Augustanæ Confessionis dicit opinionem sequacium Calvini in Deum esse blasphemas, veræ pietatis hostes, perniciosæ securitatis matrem, planissimam ad desperationem viam &c. Ab his omnibus vero reformatus quam maxime abhorret. Dicit contra reformatus doctor, Confessores Augustanos, in Dei independentiam, justitiam, sapientiam, ac gratiæ efficaciam esse injurios. Doctor vero Augustanæ Confessionis id minime admittere vult." *Stapferi Inst. Theol. Polem.* vol. v. c. 20. p. 304.

NOTE CXXXVII.

During the greater part of the seventeenth century, numerous pacificatory treatises were published by the foreign Protestant divines; which produced no other effect than that of perpetuating controversy, and embittering the discord already sown between the Reformed and Lutheran churches. The most distinguished writers of Irenica were however of the former persuasion: among whom may be mentioned David Paræus, Jo. Hoornbeek, Moses Amyraldus, Hen. Hottinger, and Jo. Hen. Heidegger. The arguments which they employed were as various as the views and dispositions of the writers: but almost all agreed in maintaining, that the differ-

ences between the two contending parties involved no fundamental articles of faith, and therefore a reconciliation might be effected, without any sacrifice of essential truths. This however was strenuously denied by their antagonists. And as the pacificators, with a disingenuity not unfrequent among incensed controversialists, chose to represent all those who opposed their propositions, as hostile, not only to *the mode*, but to *the object*, and as the advocates of perpetual and unmitigated contention; an asperity of recrimination was indulged on both sides, which soon rendered all hope of mutual agreement utterly visionary.

Some Lutheran divines also engaged in the same unprofitable undertaking: of these John Matthias, Bp. of Stenger in Sweden, and George Calixtus, have been mentioned as particularly zealous. The latter indeed did not limit his endeavours to the reconciliation of the Calvinists and Lutherans; but wished to reconcile the Romanists with both; asserting that all held the fundamentals of Christianity, though in the case of the Calvinists and Romanists, he admitted, that gross errors had been mixed with their creed. But of all the pacificators of this period, the most indefatigable, and the most celebrated, was John Dury, a Scottish divine; who, though of humble station and but moderate attainments, contrived by his perseverance and enthusiasm to attract the notice and patronage of several leading men in our own Church; and to obtain a considerable degree of respect and consideration in Germany, and other foreign countries. He was ordained by Bp. Hall; and appears to have held several preferments in England, as well as abroad; and after pursuing his wild and visionary projects without effect, for more than forty years, he at last retired to the country of Hesse, where a quiet and respectable retreat was afforded him by the Regent of the country. In his Prodromus Irenicorum Tractatuum, he tells the reader, that he had solemnly devoted his life to the reconciliation of Protestants: "Negotio tam sancto et piis omnibus gratissimo, totum se fortunasque suas et omnes vitæ suæ actiones, capite velato et conceptis verbis unice devovit." In pursuance of this vow, he endeavoured to in-

terest the English Monarch Charles I. and the bishops in his scheme; he entered into correspondence with the most learned men of the day; and in the true spirit of an enthusiast, interpreted every expression of respect and civility into an approbation of his designs; and denounced every person, who hesitated to admit their propriety or expediency, as an enemy to peace. From England he travelled into Germany, Sweden, and Denmark; declaring that he had the sanction of the King, Abp. Laud, and other leading men; and that he was commissioned by them, to inquire into the state and disposition of foreign Protestants, and to report the result of his observations. "Ex Anglia discessi ad hanc negotiationem promovendam, quod conscio rege atque archiepiscopo, regnique cancellario, atque secretario, et aliis quibusdam senatoribus factum fuit, postquam illis exhibueram memoriale, quo illis demonstrabatur, quare per conscientiam tenebantur ad hoc studium promovendum concurrere. Huic memoriali responsum fuit ab archiepiscopo, quo jubebar exteris ecclesiis ejus nomine testatum facere, se huic studio impense favere, nec suo officio pro re nata defuturum. Sed tum, propter statum publicum nondum compositum (nam hæc fiebant anno 1661) se de exteris ecclesiis cogitare non posse, donec ad pristinum statum restituantur: id ubi factum fuerit, et si intellexerint ecclesias exteras in proposito de consensu inter se stabiliendo persistere, et principes Protestantes velle negotium publicum facere, tum non defuturos se suo officio, et serenissimo regi fore auctores, ut una cum principibus negotium promoveat." (See a Letter to Meisner from Dury, cited in his Irenicum Duræanum, p. 30.) It is however to be observed, that Meisner by no means admits the truth of his assertion. In another part of his work he plainly contradicts it. "Dn. Duræus autem nec legatus est, nec reip. causa missus, nec alterius mandata, sed sua tantum placita et proprii cerebri commenta ad nos defert." (p. 379.) And again; "Quanquam unius atque alterius tam in Anglia, quam alibi degentium consensum circumferet, addit tamen Hulsemannus non paulo post quæ sequuntur: inter illos ipsos Theologos Anglos, qui Duræo testati sunt con-

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sensum suum de ineundo reconciliationis consilio (per subscriptionem instrumenti passim divulgati) nemo est Archiepiscoporum, nemo Episcoporum Angliæ, Scotiæ, aut Hyberniæ: et quanquam deinceps Episcopi Sarisburiensis, Dunelmensis, et Exoniensis in Anglia, Archiepiscopus, et Episcopi Hyberniæ; de suo consensu testati sint Duræo, nec primarii tamen sunt, nec decima pars reliquorum in Anglia et Scotia Episcoporum." (*Ibid.* p. 381.) Devoted however to this one object, he seems to have felt no scruple about the lawfulness of any means, by which he thought it might be secured. He addressed himself by turns to the heads of every party, and to the leaders of every persuasion. He was at one time a suitor to Charles the First; at another, a pulpit orator, devoted to his rebellious Parliament: and when the reign of anarchy and fanaticism was over, we find him again assailing the restored monarchy with his importunities; and endeavouring to recommend himself to the notice of Clarendon, by a recital of his endeavours to reconcile the Lutherans and Calvinists. His own principles, both religious and political, seem to have been as unsettled as the times in which he lived, and to have altered with every variation of the ruling opinions. He was first an Episcopalian, then an acting member of the Assembly of Divines, and then an Independent. He took the Covenant, the Engagement, and every discordant oath, which was exacted by different parties as they succeeded to political power, until the Restoration; and then, as we have seen, his great object was to recommend himself and his cause to the existing authorities; and he felt no difficulty in returning to those principles of obedience to his lawful king, which he had so solemnly disclaimed.

His plan for uniting the different classes of Protestants was such as might have been expected from his own character and conduct: peace was his aim, peace on any terms, and by any sacrifice; *rem quocunque modo rem.* He would have persuaded both Lutherans and Calvinists to concede something of their peculiar doctrines, opinions, and rites, out of deference to each other, and to agree in adopting some middle

system, in which the peculiarities of both might be compounded. "Utraque pars remittat aliquid de suo jure, sive dogmate, et ritibus, et in unum terminum aliquam ex duabus opinionibus conflatam, concedat." (*Meisner*, p. 404.) Or if this could not be admitted, he proposed, that each should hold their own opinions, but so tolerate those of the opposite party, as that "nec cuiquam aut Ecclesiæ suæ communione excludat." (*Ibid.* p. 405.) And then, as the grand remedy for every evil, the sure bond of peace, he recommends the prohibition of all controversy, either by preaching or printing; highly approving of the proposition made to him by some divines of the churches in Transylvania, "de calumniarum professores" (such were the titles by which all opponents of his plans were distinguished), "in templis et scholis coercentur publicis plerumque magistratuum edictis, quibus caveatur, ut non nisi ea proponant quæ faciunt ad ædificationem et fraternitatem Christianam promovendam; et si ne tum quidem quiescere esse velint, ab officio deponantur, aut certe multentur. Deinde ut moderati doctores adhibeantur, qui ineptiendi et disputandi cacoethes atque pruritum in scholis tollant; et nullum scriptum typographis excudere liceat, quod non ab omnibus et singulis professoribus diligenter sit examinatum, et juxta illorum censuras emendatum." *Ibid.* p. 416.

Was it not the property of enthusiasm to be blind to every thing but the assumed excellence of its own object, it scarcely would have escaped the observation of Dury, that such a project as this, by silencing controversy, and placing the votaries of all opinions, however discordant, upon the same footing as to their present spiritual privileges and their future prospects, opened wide the door to every error, which the foolish heart of man could engender; at the same time that his proposed mode of preventing polemical discussion tended to establish an inquisitorial tyranny, which must impede the fair exercise of reason, and leave the cause of truth without protection. In vain would the Apostle have inculcated the duty of "contending earnestly for the faith," if every controversy was to be forbidden: in vain would he have taught his successors "to hold fast

to themselves, and to the doctrine;" to "hold fast the form of sound words;" to "divide rightly the word of truth;" and "by sound doctrine both to expose and convince the gainsayers;" if, for every effort in the defence of orthodoxy, they were to be crushed by penalties, or silenced by deprivation. Meisner, who was one of Dury's most strenuous opponents, and with great ability, though perhaps more severity of language than the occasion required, analyzed and exposed the futility and mischief of his project; thus states, in the conclusion of his Treatise, the effect which would probably have followed on the success of such an attempt. "Nimirum vocant nos ad se, prætextu pacis et concordiæ: verum hanc pacis redimendæ conditionem præscribunt, non ut disceptando tractetur negotium, aut a quo parte veritas stet, exploretur; *sed ut tacendo veritatem prodamus*, et impiam doctrinam, apertasque in Deum blasphemias, tacito consensu nostro approbemus. Nec hoc agunt, ut tranquillam reddant Ecclesiam; sed ut ipsi in quietem clanculum irrepant, et furtim sinceram *Evangelii fidem* adulterent, et quod reliquum est doctrinæ evangelicæ et veræ Lutheranæ, nobis eripiant, et tanti boni possessione in totum exuant. Consiliis suis qui vel tantillum obloquuntur, nec, quo assiduis clamoribus vocant, prompte accurrunt, hos ecclesiastici belli tubas atque tibicines, classicum inter partes canentes, implacabiles, quin saxeos ac ferreos judicant. Nos autem ex adverso audiamus vocem Christi dicentis, *Ubi corpus, illuc convolabunt et aquilæ*. Audiamus Apostolum hortantem, ut *simus concordes, et consentiamus, sed in Christo*. Audiamus gravissimam Hilarii admonitionem, *Speciosum quidem nomen est pacis, et pulchra opinio unitatis, sed nemo ambigit, eam demum veram pacem esse, quæ est Christi, et eam Ecclesiæ unitatem ubi est sincera Christi veritas, ubi integer et doctrinæ et animorum in Christo consensus*. Hanc unice desideramus, hanc modis mediisque legitimis sectamur, hanc profusis ad Deum lacrymis precibusque assiduis dies noctesque efflagitamus." *Meisneri Irenicum Duræanum*, p. 455. Edit. Wittebergæ. 1675. For fuller information on the subject of this note, the reader is referred to Walchii Bibliotheca Theologica, vol. ii. c. 5. sect. 14. §. 29;

Saxii Onomasticon, vol. iv. sect. 47; Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. cent. 17. sec. 2. pt. ii.; Kennet's Register and Chronicle, Ecclesiastical and Civil, vol. i. folio. 1728.

NOTE CXXXVIII.

Such was the opinion of an elegant and amiable writer of the Calvinistic persuasion: and he gives it freely and candidly, though to the condemnation of some, who had distinguished themselves on the side of the Reformed Churches. Speaking of their attempts to restore unity, he adds; "Theologi isti, ut pacem quam optabilem tamque necessariam inter nos et Lutheranos fratres conciliarent; existimarunt inveniendas esse illas in finem *formulas loquendi vagas, generales, ambiguas*, quibus, servata qualicunque opinionum diversitate, tam *Lutheri*, quam *Zwingii et Calvini* discipuli haud difficulter subscribere possent. Sed si quod res est dicere licet, hac methodo Ecclesiæ Christi plus nocuerunt quam profuerunt, pacemque optatam potius impedivorunt quam promoverunt. Præterquam enim quod ita se magis adversariis suis suspectos, atque adeo invisos reddiderunt: quis non videt, veram pacem et concordiam neutiquam consistere in earundem vocum, syllabarum, et litterarum pronuntiatione, sed aut in pleno circa omnia, aut, quia hoc cum ratione in hac mortalium caligine sperari nequit, in sincero consensu circa fundamentalia fidei Christianæ dogmata; denique in æquanimitate et Christiana tolerantia, quoad illas opiniationes, quæ naturam et essentiam Christianismi minime constituunt." *Werenfelsii Dissertatio de Controversiis Theol. rite tractandis; Opuscula*, vol. i. p. 881. 4to. Lugd. Bat. 1772.

NOTE CXXXIX.

South calls this Covenant "the most solemn piece of perjury, the most fatal engine against the Church, and bane of monarchy, the greatest snare of souls, and mystery of iniquity, that ever was hammered by the evil and wickedness of man." Vol. v. Serm. II. Humble as such expressions may now appear, the dispassionate language, the purpose for which it was framed, and the villainies of which it was made the instrument, justly

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called forth the most severe censure. That persons, who, according to the confession of one of their leaders, (see South's Account of the Speech of Sir H. Vane at his Execution, vol. v. *ut supra*,) were even then contriving the overthrow of the Church, the destruction of the monarchy, the ruin or proscription of all who dared to defend their religion or their King; should solemnly declare, that they "had before their eyes the glory of God, and the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; the honour and happiness of the king's majesty and his posterity; and the true public liberty, safety, and peace of the kingdoms; that they should venture to call God to witness the sincerity of their intentions, and humbly beseech him to strengthen them by his Holy Spirit for this end, and to bless their desires and proceedings with success;" (see Covenant) was such a mockery of all that is sacred, such a prostitution of the terms and forms of religion, as is perhaps unequalled in the history of any other age or country.

The oppression and persecutions which were perpetrated by means of this Covenant have been so fully detailed by contemporary annalists, that it is needless to recapitulate them. Walker also, in his "Sufferings of the Clergy," has shewn how ready and effectual an engine it became for the destruction of the Church, and the spoliation of her revenues and her ministers.

NOTE CXL.

"It must not forget," says Clarendon, "though it cannot be remembered without much horrour, that this strange wildfire among the people, was not so much and so furiously kindled by the breath of the Parliament, as of their clergy; who both administered fuel, and blowed the coales in the houses too. These men having crept into, and at last driven all learned and orthodox men from the pulpits, had, as is before remembered, from the beginning of this Parliament, under the notion of reformation and extirpating of Popery, infused seditious inclinations into the hearts of men against the present government of the Church, with many libellous invec-

tists against the State too. But since the raising an army, and rejecting the King's last overtures of treaty, they contained themselves within no bounds, and as freely and without controul inveighed against the person of the King, as they had before against the worst malignant; prophanely, and blasphemously applying whatsoever had been spoken and declared by God himself, or the Prophets, against the most wicked and impious kings, to incense and stir up the people against their most gracious Sovereign." *History of the Rebellion*, b. 6. vol. ii. p. 17. folio. This was principally the work of the lecturers; men chosen by the Parliament from the most violent and audacious of the Nonconformist preachers, and forced upon the established Clergy, who were compelled to surrender their pulpits to them, in violation of their legal and undoubted rights, by a series of the most vexatious and harassing proceedings. "If any grave and learned minister refused to admit into his church a lecturer recommended by them, (and I am confident there was not, from the beginning of this Parliament, one orthodox or learned man recommended by them to any church in England,) he was presently required to attend upon the committee, and not discharged till the Houses met again; and then likewise, if he escaped commitment, continued to his intolerable loss and trouble: few men having the patience to endure that oppression, against which they knew not whither to appeal; and therefore in the end submitted to what they could not resist; and so all pulpits were supplied with their seditious and schismatical preachers." *Hist. b. 4. vol. i. p. 238. folio Edit.*

The miserable effects resulting from the labours of these men cannot be more forcibly set forth than by the following observations and narration of Heath. "How," says he, "came so many thousands to fight and die in the same rebellion? Why they were deceived into it by those spiritual trumpeters, who followed them with continual alarms of damnation, if they did not venture life, fortune, and all, in that which wickedly and devilishly those impostors called the cause of God. So that I myself have heard one say, (Colonel Attell)

whose quarters have since hung about that city, where he first had been deceived; that they with many more, went to that execrable war with such a controuling horror upon their spirits, from those sermons, (he particularly mentioned those of Brookes and Calamy,) that they verily believed that they should have been accursed by God for ever, if they had not acted their part in that dismal tragedy, and heartily done the Devil's work, being so effectually called and commanded to it in God's name." *South*, vol. i. Serm. XII.

NOTE CXLI.

Additional testimony of the same kind may be produced in abundance. Matthew Newcomen, in a sermon preached before the two Houses of Parliament and the Assembly of Divines, so early as July 1648, when the Covenant had not yet been solemnly taken, though its principles had been universally acted upon, wherever the influence of the Parliament extended, breaks forth into the following declamatory lamentation over the religious contentions, by which the kingdom was then harassed. "O the bitter *divisions* and *digladiations* of Protestants amongst themselves in these bleeding times. *For the divisions of Reuben there are great searchings of heart; for the divisions of Reuben there are great searchings of heart.* Holy *Ridley* and *Hooper*, though in the times of the *peace* and *liberty* of the Gospel, they could never agree about black and white, but had many wrathful bickerings, yet in time of *persecution* for the *Gospel*, they could, as their own expression is, agree in red; when God came to put them together in tears, and sufferings, and blood, they could forget all differences of judgement then, and *love*, and *live*, and *die* together as brethren. Do these know *what spirit* they are of, that at such a time as this, when all the true-hearted Protestants in England are put in one calamitous, suffering, bleeding condition, are yet quarrelling about their own opinions, weakening the Protestant party by *subdivisions*, which if united is scarce enough to withstand the common adversary?" And Baxter, in one of his tracts, written after he had more fully experienced the bitter consequences of that un-

godly work, in which he himself had borne so conspicuous a part, declares; "I have had so great opportunity in my time, to see the working of the mystery of iniquity against Christian love, and to see in what manner Christ's house and kingdome is edified by divisions, that if I be ignorant after such sad experience, I must be utterly inexcusable, and of a seared conscience, and a heart that seemeth hardened to perdition. God knoweth how hardly sin is known in its secret root, till men have tasted the bitterness of the fruit. Therefore he hath permitted the *two extreams* to shew themselves openly to the world in the effects; and *one* must be noted, and hated, and avoided as well as the *other*. I thought once, that all that talk against *schism* and sects did but vent their malice against the best Christians under those names: but since then I have seen what love-killing principles have done. I have long stood by, while churches have been divided and subdivided; one congregation of the division labouring to make the other contemptible and odious; and this called *the preaching of truth, and the purer worshipping of God*. I have seen this grow up to the height of *Ranters*, in horrid blasphemies; and then of *Quakers*, in disdainful pride and surliness; and into the way of *Seekers*, that were to seek for a ministry, a church, a scripture, and consequently a Christ. I have many a time heard it break out into more horrid revilings of the best ministry and godliest people, than ever I heard from the most malignant drunkard: I have lived to see it put to the question in that which they called, *the little Parliament*, whether all the ministers in the parishes of *England* should be put down at once. When love was first killed in their own breasts by these same principles, which I here detect, I have seen how confidently the killing of the King, the rebellious demolishing of the government of the land, the killing of many thousands of their brethren, the turning and overturning of all kinds of rule, even that which they themselves set up, have been committed, and justified, and prophanely fathered upon God. These, with much more such fruits of love-killing principles and divisions, I have seen." *Baxter, Cure of Ch. Divisions, Preface.*

NOTE CXLII.

Dr. Burnet's Exposition is in many respects a valuable work; and, as a summary of the opinions held by disagreeing theologians on the several important doctrines treated in the Articles, perhaps its place could not be readily supplied. But though it may be usefully and safely consulted as such, it can scarcely be considered as a guide to the real sense of the Articles; and the student who expects to be directed by it in his search after the authorized doctrine of the Church of England, will sometimes lament that the studied impartiality of the author has tended rather to perplex than assist him in forming his judgment upon some very intricate questions. In this respect the title of the treatise has perhaps raised expectation, which its contents have disappointed; and this may have contributed to induce many excellent men to join in its condemnation with those who have considered it favourable to an undue latitude of interpretation. Such was certainly the light in which it was viewed by many of the clergy on its first publication; for the Lower House of Convocation laid a formal complaint against it, before their metropolitan and the other members of the Upper House, in which they gave it as their deliberate opinion, "that the said book tends to introduce such a latitude and diversity of opinions, as the Articles were framed to avoid." See *Binckes's Prefatory Discourse*, p. 6.

It may perhaps be said, that at this time parties ran high in the Church as well as in the State; and that the minds of men were too much inflamed to be capable of forming a candid and impartial judgment. Some allowance undoubtedly should be made for the influence of angry feelings; but the complainants, it is to be observed, did not rest in unsupported allegations. Dr. Binckes published a statement of some, at least of the reasons by which they had been guided; and though an unnecessary warmth of expression may probably be observable in his discourse, it cannot be denied that a good severity of language was also employed on the other side, although no attempt was made fairly to meet his

arguments. (See *Remarks on the Examination of the Exposition of the second Article of our Church by Gilbert, Ld. Bp. of Sarum*, p. 2—7.) Without however impeaching the integrity, or depreciating the ability of either party, we may now try the cause by its own merits; and it will perhaps be allowed, that such a latitude as the author of the Exposition seems in his Introduction willing to admit, would materially lessen the intended good effect of subscription. The Articles were drawn up "for the avoiding of diversities of opinions, and for the stablishing of consent touching true religion." And still farther to secure this object, King Charles I. in his declaration prefixed to them, A. D. 1628, expressly forbade any man "to put his own sense or comment to be the meaning" of that article, which was then particularly the subject of controversy; and directed that it should be taken in the literal and grammatical sense. And Bp. Burnet appears to allow, that this rule was also to be applied to all the Articles generally. (See his *Introduction to the Exposition.*) It appears then, that the composers of the Articles designed them to convey some definite meaning; as otherwise they never could have prevented "diversities of opinions:" it was also evidently the intent of the declaration, that some one interpretation should be universally adopted; for "the avoiding diversities" is still the object in view; for this purpose it is strictly enjoined, that thereafter no man should put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the article. The conduct therefore of the Church is intelligible and consistent. To prevent diversities of opinions, she draws up a formulary of faith, which she requires all her ministers to subscribe; and finding that this formulary itself has been differently understood, she still further enforces uniformity by binding all who subscribe to her Articles, not to put their own comments upon them, but to take them in the literal and grammatical sense. But the learned Prelate has hazarded the removal of all the defences against diversities of opinion which the Church had raised. For he lays down this as a rule of interpretation; that, because every subscriber is directed to take the Articles in their literal and grammatical

sense, therefore, "when an article is conceived in such general words, that it can admit of different literal and grammatical senses, even when the senses given are plainly contrary one to another, yet both may subscribe the article with a good conscience, and without equivocation." (See *Introduction to the Exposition.*) Such a canon, were it once admitted, would render the subscription of the clergy nugatory, as far as it was intended to establish "consent among them touching true religion." The skill of every subscriber might then be lawfully exercised, to discover what new sense the words of any article could be made to bear; and the effect would be, that every man would put his own sense or comment to be the meaning of the article. The author of the Exposition has shewn us, that very different meanings may, by an exertion of ingenuity, be attached to the same words; and it is notorious, that language can scarcely be framed, which may not be liable to the same process. But it may be asked, if the words of some articles will bear different senses, each of which may be made to appear literal and grammatical, how are we to select, out of this variety, that one sense, which they were meant to convey? This has been so well answered by Dr. Binckes, that I cannot do better than adopt his words. "The Articles, no doubt, as well as other compositions, notwithstanding all the care that hath been taken about them, might be liable to many different interpretations, since even the Scriptures themselves are so: but that which makes it not very easie for a diligent enquirer to be at any great loss as to the true sense of our Articles, is our having so many standing expositors and interpreters of them, provided by the Church itself; all which do speak its sense, and are of the same authority as the very Articles themselves. If any thing in the Articles may seem to carry a double meaning, or may be said to be obscure, we have the Homilies, the Liturgy, the Rubrick, the Canons; we have the uninterrupted practice of the Church, and the writings of the many learned divines our Church hath been blessed with for sevenscore years and upwards, by way of sure conveyance of what may be called tradition. All these helps we have whereby to be ascertained of

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the true import of the Articles, insomuch as to make it hard for any one to plead ignorance in any thing material; so effectually hath the Church provided against diversity of opinions in those who are admitted to the ministry, and are qualified thereto, by subscribing to the Articles; there being nothing more plain, than that the design of the Church in framing the Articles, and suiting them to her known established doctrines, was that all her children should agree in such necessary points of religion, as she hath thought fit to put together for the more easie information and instruction of all such as pretend to be of her communion." *Preface Discourse to an Examination of a late Book entitled, 'An Exposition,'* &c. p. 13. Lond. 4to. 1702.

Such then being the case, it surely becomes all who declare that they willingly and *ex animo* subscribe to articles, upon which they know that they are not to put their own sense, first to enquire diligently what is the sense in which the Church understands them; for in that sense, and in no other, does she expect them to "acknowledge all and every article to be agreeable to the Word of God;" and thus it is that she intends to avoid diversities of opinions, and to establish consent touching true religion." To suppose otherwise and that the Church designed to "encourage persons of very different persuasions, and opposite constitutions, to subscribe to the same Articles, under colour of the words admitting different grammatical senses, would not redound very much to its credit, if Bp. Taylor in his Ductor Dubitantium be in the right: where, speaking of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of subscribing with this sort of reserve, he has this expression; "This is the last remedy, but the worst: it hath in it something of craft, but very little of ingenuity; and if it can serve the ends of peace, or of external charity, it cannot serve the ends of truth, holiness, and Christian simplicity." *Ductor Dub.* l. iv. c. 4. v. 23. §. 1, 2, 3. "To talk of what the words will bear, may do well enough in pleadings upon deeds and covenants in common law; but where religion is concerned, men are supposed to proceed according to equity and with sincerity; when the sense of the Church is any way so made known to us, as that we cannot well

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be ignorant of it, without shutting our eyes so close as to amount to an affected blindness, we are not to pretend to put constructions of our own upon the decisions of the Church, under colour of some grammatical sense the words may with some force be made to bear; though where we have no such way of coming to the right sense of an article, and the Church by its silence may seem to leave men to their own thoughts; there no doubt all men are at liberty, the Church not having thought it needful to provide against diversities of opinions in things of less moment, determining only the more essential necessary doctrines in religion; but what does appear to be determined by the Church in her Articles, that we ought to assent to and agree with her in, or not subscribe." *Præf. Disc. ut sup.* p. 29.

NOTE CXLIII.

By a special commission under the Great Seal, ten bishops and twenty divines were empowered to meet, and prepare such alterations in the Book of Common Prayer, and Canons, as might be fit to lay before the Convocation: and it appears, that they did not limit their views to a revision of the language of the Liturgy; but that they proposed either entirely to lay aside those ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, with which the Nonconformists had refused to comply, or to dispense with their use where scruples were alleged against it. Persons were to be allowed to receive the sacrament without kneeling, though that was to be still "the received and favoured posture." *Burnet's own Times*, vol. ii. p. 32. In baptism, it was probably intended to concede the same liberty, respecting the sign of the cross, and the use of sponsors: and the chanting in cathedrals was to have been discontinued, as well as the use of the surplice. Such at least were the alterations generally supposed to have been in contemplation. (See the different accounts given of the proceedings of the commisioners — *Calamy's Life of Baxter*, vol. i. cap. 17.) And it is known that Bp. Burnet, who had great influence among the commissioners, was favourable to them. (See *Burnet's own Times*, vol. ii. p. 636.) It was part of his plan also to have removed

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the obligation of subscribing to the Articles, letting them still continue the standard of doctrine, but upholding this standard by censuring those who deserted it, instead of requiring subscription as a previous qualification for the ministry. (*Burnet, ut supra*, vol. ii. p. 684.) If however it is better to prevent an evil, than to remedy it; if consent touching true religion, and the concord and unity consequent upon it, are more likely to be secured by allowing those only to teach in the Church, who will conform to one known system of doctrines, than by inflicting punishment on those, who inculcate contrary tenets; it will be acknowledged, that the Bishop's scheme was little calculated to be of real service to the cause of peace or truth.

It does not however appear, that this plan was ever entirely matured: some even of those divines who were named upon the commission, soon discontinued their attendance, declaring themselves dissatisfied with the proceedings. "They said that the altering the forms and constitution of our Church to gratify a peevish and obstinate party, was like to have no other effect on them, but to make them more insolent; and the Church, by offering these alterations, seemed to confess, that she had been hitherto in the wrong. They thought that this attempt would divide us among ourselves, and make our people lose their esteem for the Liturgy, if it appeared that it wanted correction." *Burnet's own Times*, vol. ii. p. 31. It is probable that some of these divines, had they been their own historians, would have stated their reasons for disliking the comprehension somewhat more forcibly; but, at all events, the notorious fact that those proceedings were disagreeable to a large proportion of the clergy, should have induced the projectors to pause before they urged on a scheme, which they knew to be distasteful to the

It should be mentioned, that the idea of a comprehension did not originate with Bp. Burnet, or the divines who thought with him; it was first proposed by Abp. Sancroft, but by his plan it was intended to provide effectually for the *entire preservation* of the *doctrine, government*, and *worship* of the Church; and could this object have been thus attained, every true friend of religion would have taken a part in its pursuit. See *Bp. Wake's Speech at Southampton Trial*,

members of the Church, though they were by no means certain that it would satisfy its opponents. It surely could be no safe or expedient measure of union, which created jealousies and divisions *within* the Church, but did not ensure peace *without*." Had some portion of the moderate and conciliatory feelings, which the advocates for a comprehension maintained in their dealings with the dissenters, been bestowed upon those of their own brethren, who could not conscientiously give their assent to these proposed concessions, the Church would have been preserved from the evils of internal discord; and they would have escaped the mortification of witnessing the failure of their design.

Burnet himself confesses, that the opposition it excited was too considerable to be overcome. "It soon became very visible, that we were not in a temper cool and calm enough to encourage the further prosecution of such a design." *Own Times*, vol. ii. p. 33. And another writer, who lies under less suspicion of leaning to either party, draws a melancholy picture of the dissensions which it occasioned. "No misfortune so sensibly afflicted the Church, as this dissension between the clergy. For hitherto our clergy had lived with great concord among themselves, not to be divided by any arts of their adversaries. For in the late times, under their most afflicted condition, when they were turned out of, or sequestered from, their livings; by reason of their good correspondence with one another, they bore their afflictions the more easily. And afterwards, when their condition was bettered, no envy, which is wont to dissolve the friendship of others, was able to interrupt their unity. But now, when all of them, perhaps, in their several ways, were desirous to promote the good of the Church, they unfortunately accused each other for carrying on designs for its ruin." *Nichols, Defence of the Church of England, Introduction*, p. 123. It is however to be observed, that, while these unhappy differences of opinion prevailed among the clergy, as to the propriety or expediency of these proposed alterations, as respected the interests of the Church; the conduct of the dissenters was not such, as to encourage an expectation, that they would have been

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conciliated by them. "The Nonconformists," says Nichols, "by no public or private writing that I know of, shewed any propension to an union, or signified what alterations in the ecclesiastical constitution would satisfie them, so as to come into the Church." *Defence of Church of England, Introduction*, p. 141. It is nevertheless plain enough, from the observations of Calamy in his Life of Baxter, published not long after, that they would not have consented to any thing short of an allowance of presbyterian orders, as giving a valid title to the exercise of the ministry in our Church. (See *Life of Baxter*, vol. i. p. 448, and note. 2d Edition.)

NOTE CXLIV.

The controversy respecting occasional conformity was continued at intervals during nine years, from A. D. 1702, when a bill to prevent it was first brought into Parliament; until the end of the year 1711, when the practice was at last restrained by a law. The reasoning urged on both sides, in the debates on the different bills which were successively introduced into the two houses of Parliament during this period, may be found briefly stated in Burnet's History of his own Times, vol. ii.; and more at length by Calamy, in his Life of Baxter, vol. i. ch. 19. The practice itself was defended by some of the more violent Dissenters, who even appealed to the conduct of our Saviour and his Apostles in its support; and asserted, that the principles of the occasional conformists were truly Christian and Catholic. (See *Calamy's Baxter*, vol. i. p. 650.) They took advantage also of the observations which had fallen from some of the adversaries of the bills in the House of Lords; and suggested, as they had done, that occasional conformity would be an advantage to the Church, and would weaken the Dissenters. But it was so evident, that, had the Dissenters really expected this to be the result, they would never have thought themselves aggrieved by an act for its prevention; that such remarks could have had little weight with men of any reflection. Occasional conformity seemed indeed so plainly indefensible, upon any ground on which the Nonconformists had hitherto attempted to justify their

separation; that the wiser and more moderate of their party spoke in very cautious and qualified terms upon the subject. "It is not indeed to be thought," said one of their writers, "that the judgment and practice of such men (the occasional conformists) can be throughout approved by our reverend fathers and brethren of the Established Church: as neither can we pretend it to be so universally by ourselves. But we are remote from any, the least suspicion, that persons of so excellent worth and Christian temper, as now preside over the Established Church, can suffer themselves to judge or censure men of this sentiment, as being, for this single reason, men of hypocritical and insincere minds; but that they will rather think it possible their understandings may be imposed upon, so as this may be the judgment, in the whole, of a sincere though misinformed conscience." See *Mr. Howe's Letter, Calamy's Life of Baxter*, vol. i. p. 580. It could not however be concealed, that, although the more rigid separatists were probably influenced by conscientious motives, they who conformed occasionally were for the most part actuated by views of interest or ambition; and however they attempted to disguise their real object, by professions of enlarged and liberal views, and a desire not to confine their communion to any one sect or party of Christians, but to have an universal and comprehensive charity towards all that belong to that mystical body, (see *Moderation a Virtue, by James Owen, as cited by Calamy, Life of Baxter*, vol. i. p. 650.) it was evident, that a desire to share in political power led to the practice, and that it was, what the author above referred to would willingly have disclaimed, "a crafty invention to get into place."

The observations of Calamy on the passing of the bill will set the real cause of the dissatisfaction with which they viewed its provisions in too clear a light to be mistaken. "Thus after fifty years exclusion from the public churches, by the act of uniformity, during the one half of which they were exposed to great rigours and severities, though during the other half they have had more liberty, are the poor Dissenters excluded *the service of the State*. So far are we from any hopes

of a coalition, which has been so often urged of late, that nothing will do but an entire submission. *Consciences truly scrupulous* may indeed still have their liberty: *but they that would be capable of any places of profit or trust*, must quit the meetings after March 25, 1712." *Calamy's Life of Baxter*, vol. i. p. 725.

NOTE CXLV.

Whatever might have been the intention of the learned Prelate (Burnet) himself, the language, which he tells us that he ventured to use in opposition to the bill, was certainly capable of this construction. It was language, which might be appealed to for the defence of any latitude of practice, with respect to church-communion, in which the waywardness of a man might incline him to indulge. The speaker should have been aware, that the case of an occasional conformist in this country was not analogous to that of a member of the Church of England attending the worship of a Protestant church during his residence in a foreign nation. "I ventured to say, that a man might lawfully communicate with a Church, that he thought had a worship and a doctrine uncorrupted, and yet communicate more frequently with a Church, that he thought more perfect: I myself had communicated with the churches of Geneva and Holland; and yet at [b] the same time communicated with the Church of England: so, though the Dissenters were in a mistake, as to their opinion, which was the more perfect Church, yet allowing them a toleration in that error, this practice might be justified." *Burnet's own Times*, vol. ii. p. 364. See also the arguments used by the managers for the lords, at the Conference of the two Houses respecting the bill.

[b] It is presumed that by these words, "at the same time," the Bishop only meant that he continued a member of the Church of England, and as such in communion with it. For if he designed to say, that, when in Holland or Geneva he had the same opportunities of attending the public service of his own Church, as when in England; and yet occasionally left it to communicate with the churches of those countries; his case certainly bears a nearer analogy than was at first supposed to that of those persons, whose conduct the best men of the party scarcely ventured to justify.

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(Calamy's *Baxter*, vol. i. p. 630, 632, 633.) In a postscript addressed to occasional separatists, in "Daubeny's Guide to the Church," the reader will find some observations, which will give him a much clearer idea of his duty, as a member of our own excellent Church, than can be drawn from the language above quoted.

NOTE CXLVI.

Bp. Hoadley, in his "Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Non-Jurors," published A. D. 1716, laid down the following positions, as "the first principles of all truth and Christianity in its first simplicity." That "every man may find it in his own conduct to be true, that his title to God's favour cannot depend upon his actual being or continuing in any particular method; but upon his real sincerity in the conduct of his conscience." That "the favour of God follows sincerity, considered as such; and consequently equally follows every equal degree of sincerity." That "when men are secure of their integrity before God, and of their sincere disposition to search after his will, and to receive the truth, in the love of truth, whensoever and from whomsoever it is offered, this will lead them (as it ought all of us) not to be afraid of the *terrors* of men, or the *vain words of, regular and uninterrupted successions; authoritative benedictions, excommunications, or absolutions; nullity* or *validity* of *God's ordinances* to the *people*, upon account of *niceties* and *trifles*; or any other the like *dreams*."

It was maintained by his acute opponent, that by the latter position thus much must be implied: "Be not afraid of the terrors of men, who would persuade you of the danger of being in this or that communion, and fright you into particular ways of worshipping God; who would make you believe such sacraments and such clergy are necessary to recommend you to his favour: these we may contemn, if we are but secure of our integrity." And when taken in connection with the two former positions, (and in the Bishop's tract they form a connected series of argument; the several propositions being only disjoined from each other by the instances which he has selected to illustrate each as he proceeds,)

Mr. Law considers himself justified in asserting, that "he has not wrested his Lordship's meaning by saying, that, according to these notions, if a man be not an hypocrite, it matters not what religion he is of. Not only sincere Quakers, Ranters, Muggletonians, and Fifth Monarchy Men, are as much in the favour of God as any of the Apostles; but likewise sincere Jews, Turks, and Deists, are upon as good a bottom, and as secure of the favour of God, as the sincerest Christian. For your Lordship saith, it is sincerity, as such, that procures the favour of God. If it be sincerity, as such, then it is sincerity independent and exclusive of any particular way of worship: and if the favour of God equally follow every equal degree of sincerity, then it is impossible there should be any difference, either as to merit or happiness, between a sincere martyr and a sincere persecutor; and he that burns the Christian, if he be but in earnest, has the same title to a reward for it, as he that is burnt for believing in Christ." *Law's first Letter to Bp. Hoadley.*

To follow Mr. Law through his whole examination of these and other positions laid down by his opponent, would be here unnecessary; for the three letters, in which it is contained, are by no means difficult of access. Besides, the argument itself would suffer from compression; and it would be alike unjust to the learned writer, and to the cause he was advocating, not to leave him to maintain it in his own words. A careful perusal and comparison of these letters with the publications they were designed to answer, will be a useful exercise for the theological student. Bp. Hoadley's works are printed in three large folio volumes; the first of these contains the "Preservative;" and the second, all his tracts relative to "the Bangorian Controversy." The letters of Law were republished in "The Scholar Armed;" a collection of tracts, which should be found in the library of every Clergyman.

NOTE CXLVII.

The petition expresses, that the petitioners "apprehend subscription to be a great hindrance to the spreading of Christ's true religion: as it tends to preclude, at

least to discourage, further enquiry into the true sense of Scripture, to divide communions, and cause mutual dislike between fellow Protestants." They declare their opinion, "that it tends (and the evil daily increases) unhappily to divide the clergy of the Establishment themselves, subjecting one part thereof, who desert but their Protestant privilege to question every human doctrine, and bring it to the test of Scripture, to be reviled, as well from the pulpit as the press, by another part, who seem to judge the Articles they have subscribed to be of equal authority with the holy Scripture itself." (See a Copy of the Petition, *Gent. Mag.* Feb. 1772.) In the debates in Parliament, among other arguments in favour of the petition, this was urged; that a happy opportunity was now offered of opening such a door for the Dissenters, as it was probable that most of them would enter in at, and thereby be received in the bosom of the Established Church: that instead of weakening it, this would be a means of giving it such a firmness of strength, as nothing could shake; and that the Church of England could never be in any danger while the hierarchy and bishops existed." On the contrary, it was insisted, by the most moderate of the opponents of the petition, "that it was necessary that those, who were appointed to be the public teachers and instructors of the people, should be bound by some certain principles, from which they were not to deviate: that to prevent the disorder and confusion incident to so great a number, it was also necessary, that some public symbol should be established, to which they should all assent, as a mark of their conformity and union; that a simple assent to the Scriptures would in this case be of no signification; as every day's experience shewed, that no two would agree in their general construction of them; and that it was too well known, that the greatest absurdities, and even blasphemies, had at different times been attempted to have been supported or defended upon their authority. It was also said, that so far as subscription related to the clergy, who were those principally concerned, it would not be considered that they suffered any injustice, as they were under no necessity of accepting benefices contrary to

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their consciences; and if their scruples arose afterwards, they had it always in their power to quit them; and that every man now, according to the prayer of the petition, was at liberty to interpret the Scriptures for his own private use; but that his being authorized to do so for others, contrary to their inclination, was a matter of a very different nature." Many also opposed the petition, "because they would not give any opportunity of increasing our civil dissensions by lighting up the more dangerous flames of religious controversy." Votes for bringing up the petition, 71; against it, 217. Majority against the petition 146. (See *Annual Register*, 1772.) A collection of various papers, published at the time, on both sides of the question, may be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1772 and 1773.

Dr. Worthington, in his "Irenicum, or the Importance of Unity," London, 1775, has some remarks, which seem to bear reference to this project. "Conscious however of the necessity of some band of union, at least in appearance, subscription to the Scriptures alone is proposed, as what would answer all the intents and purposes of subscription [c] whatsoever. Whereas it would really answer no other end, than that of an unlimited latitude, which alone is aimed at; so contrary to all union, and all the purposes of it. For the experience of all ages may teach us, that the Scriptures alone, though all things necessary and sufficient to salvation are plainly taught in them, yet are not a sufficient preservative to themselves from being misunderstood, and wrested by those that are unlearned and unstable, unto their own destruction. This is what Scripture itself informs us of. It is therefore the highest absurdity to think, that a vague subscription to these same Scriptures should be an effectual preservative against all those false doctrines, which have, age after age, been grafted upon them; and should alone prove an adequate means of uniting us in the same judgment, concerning the great truths contained in them. Hence

[c] It appears, from contemporary records, that this formed part of the design of those who favoured the petition. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1772, p. 412.

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the wisdom of the Church hath, in all ages, found it expedient and necessary to guard and fence about them, with more explicit declarations of such doctrines, as she perceived were in danger of being perverted from their first and primitive sense; especially if they were some of the most fundamental ones, that were struck at; and by all the prudent means in her power, to be watchful over the sacred trust committed to her; and to keep the word of God from being *corrupted and deceitfully dealt with.* But supposing subscription to the Scriptures alone were to take place—supposing no other test were required, than a declaration, that a man was 'a Christian and a Protestant; and that as such, he received the revelation of the will of God contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as the rule of his faith and practice;' would all stand to this test? would this give universal satisfaction? A considerable body of Protestant Dissenters soon entered a *caveat* against this test; and prayed to Parliament, that the petition for this request might not be granted; alleging, among several other reasons, that 'a very great number of Protestant Dissenters, ministers and others, would be dissatisfied, if the intended alteration were to take place.' And with regard to those that would be satisfied for the present, are they quite sure that all would continue long in the same mind? that some farther alteration in the mode of subscription would not be wanted? whether some would not be for refining upon it? and for making some reserves, some exceptions, and explanations of the sense, in which they subscribed, or declared? They now propose to subscribe in a certain form of words, to be observed by all: possibly some may be found, who will not subscribe in any words but their own. Dr. Hartley disapproved of subscribing to the Scriptures at all. 'It seems needless, or ensnaring,' says he, 'to subscribe even to the Scriptures themselves. If to any particular canon, or copy, &c. ensnaring; because of the real doubts in those things. If not, it is quite superfluous, from the latitude allowed.' And I am really so far of his mind, that if we are to have no other subscription, than such a one to the Scriptures, *that* may as well be

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let alone; and we may even be without any subscription at all." *Worthington's Irenicum*, p. 137.

NOTE CXLVIII.

Grotius has himself recorded his own sentiments upon this subject. "Pacem amavi semper amoque, et ad eam labores meos quà publicos, qua privatos dirigo, ut eam obtineamus primum inter imperia Christum profitentia, deinde in Ecclesia quam unam Christus esse voluit: pacem autem intelligo illæsa illa veritate, quam nobis sacra Scriptura et perpetua traditio consignant. Cum vero pax, etiamsi facta esset, servari non posset sine certo regiminis ordine, amo et ordinem eum quem longa sæculorum veterum experientia probavit. Hæc qui amant fieri non potest, quin in odia incurrant eorum qui bellis ac dissidiis frui volunt, qualium hinis ferax est hæc ætas. Tales pacis hostes in me et pacis studium insurrecturos satis prævidi ac facile patior, solorque me conscientia honestissimi propositi, cui promovendo ea attuli, quæ mihi pro ingenii ac lectionis mihi concessæ modo optima, habita et temporum quibus vivimus aliqua ratione, videbantur. Disciplinam vero morum adeo non defugio ut modo pax coeat, nulla futura sit tam severa, cui non libenter me meosque sim subjecturus." *Animadversiones in Animad. Riveti, suo fratri; Grotii Opera*, vol. iii. p. 650. Edit. London.

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SERMON VIII.

NOTE CXLIX.

THE salvability of the heathen is discussed with much judgment and moderation by Plaifere, in a short appendix to his "Appeal to the Gospel for the true Doctrine of Divine Predestination." The subject is one in which every humane and charitable person will feel deeply interested; and such readers, even if they be not entirely satisfied with the author's reasonings, will at least (as the editors of the tracts observe) "wish them to be well grounded, if they be not."

The following observations, with which he opens his argument, are well fitted to incline the reader in its favour. "If we make a research into what all religion is founded upon, it will appear principally the belief of the Divine goodness; without this, men could not think the Supreme Being to be of such condescension as to take notice of them and their actions; much less without a persuasion of it, would any be induced to credit his having revealed himself to them, or reconciled himself to us by the incarnation and sufferings of his Son. Whatsoever therefore weakens the belief of this, must lessen the reasonableness and credibility of religion. But that God should not only have given greater light, and better means of attaining blessedness, to the visible Church, but also have wholly excluded the bulk of mankind, who never had opportunity of coming within the pale of it, from a possibility of salvation, seems no way reconcileable with it. For if to have raised out of the womb of faultless unoffending nothing infinite myriads of men, into a condition from which unthinking they should unavoidably drop into eternal unutterable sor-

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rows, be consistent with goodness; contradictions may be true, and all rational deductions but a dream. It therefore seems necessary to conclude, from the benignity of the divine nature, that he would give, to all those whom his just severity had brought under the disadvantageous effects of their progenitors' disobedience, a possibility at least of avoiding the more miserable consequences, and of bettering their condition." If the passages which the author brings forward from Scripture be not considered as sufficiently explicit to justify our full assent to his conclusions, they will at least prevent our determining peremptorily against them. It is not however to be imagined, nor would this author have encouraged such an idea, that, under any circumstances, the same degree of bliss can be attainable by the ignorant heathen, as by the faithful and obedient Christian. If the involuntary disobedience of the former will be less severely punished; we may suppose, that his untutored obedience will be also less richly rewarded. And this consideration alone should urge us to impart the light of Christianity to all who sit in darkness; though, at the same time, we may cherish a hope, that as "they who have sinned without law, shall be judged without the law;" so for them also, who have lived to the best of their power, according to the law of God written in the hearts of all men, a blessing is reserved. At the same time, they, who, dwelling among the heathen, have not even contributed, by the bright influence of a Christian example, to turn the hearts of the Gentiles to the obedience of the faith, will do well to consider the following remarks, with which the learned author closes his subject. They are perhaps applicable to too many of our countrymen, and may awaken them to a profitable, though a painful sense of opportunities neglected, and duties omitted. "As to the too great part of the world, which, since the publication of the Gospel, hath not been Christian, their case is most hazardous who have had opportunities of knowing the doctrine of Christ, but made no use of them, or have not believed it when preached to them. And the question about the salvability of particular persons in such circumstances cannot be resolved,

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without we had an exact knowledge of their neglect, or unbelief; but a general answer is very obvious. A neglect in acquiring a knowledge of the Christian faith is faulty or excusable, according as men had or wanted motives to think it reasonable or necessary; and the blame of all unbelief is aggravated or extenuated proportionably, as the credibility of the teacher, or the arguments used by him, were more or less sufficient and fit to have convinced the hearers, if they had judged impartially. But perhaps it would not be difficult to give a moral demonstration, that a far greater proportion of them than nine parts out of ten have scarce heard of the Christian profession, or at most have but a very imperfect notion of it, and of the grounds on which it is founded. An huge part of mankind very long had, or still have, little or no intercourse with Christians; corruption and ignorance long overspread the face of religion, vile opinions prevailed, and wicked practices were indulged in the Church; and some or all of them are still lamentably prevalent in a great part of her, which must needs divert many from embracing the faith; and give them strong prejudices against it: and consequently their infidelity is rather chargeable on Christians, so miserably recommending their religion. Again at this day Christian princes and states are deplorably wanting in taking proper measures for the instruction, even of their own vassals and subjects; and Christians of all ranks, not only express no concern for the conversion of neighbouring heathen, but render their religion odious to them by their cruelty, avarice, lust, or perfidiousness. And where such attempts have been made for propagating our religion, it hath frequently been by such, who having departed from the simplicity and purity of the Gospel, have confounded it with fables, and debased it with the alloys of error and superstition. All which considered, the heathen who are nearest to, and have most conversation with us, may be looked upon by God, as under equal disadvantages with those, who never heard the name of Christ. And though there be an heavy guilt in their infidelity, it must devolve from the infidel on the

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Christian." *Plaifere's Appeal to the Gospel*, &c.—*Collection of Tracts.* Cambridge. 1719.

NOTE CL.

The opinions held by many in the primitive Church upon this subject may be found detailed at considerable length by Mosheim, De Rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum, sæc. ii. s. 38. See also the Fragments of Papias, published in Routh's Reliquiæ Sacræ, vol. i. and the Annotations of the learned Editor. Many curious and valuable observations on the opinions of the Chiliasts may also be found interspersed among the letters of Joseph Mede. Works, b. 4.

NOTE CLI.

Of these may be mentioned particularly the Fifth Monarchy Men;—"a set," says Mosheim, "of wrong-headed and turbulent enthusiasts, who expected Christ's sudden appearance upon earth, to establish a new kingdom; and, acting in consequence of this illusion, aimed at the subversion of all human government, and were for turning all things into the most deplorable confusion." *Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.* cent. 17. sect. 2. part 2. chap. 2. s. 22. The tumults and commotions which were excited by the Anabaptists in Germany, A.D. 1521, under their leaders Munzer and his associates, may be traced in great measure to the same delusion. "They declared war against all laws, governments, and magistrates of every kind, under the chimerical pretext, that Christ was now to take the reins of civil and ecclesiastical government into his own hands." *Mosheim*, cent. 16. s. 3. part. 2. chap. 3. s. 4.

NOTE CLII.

The expression in the original, κἀκεῖνα μὲ δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν, is not rendered by our translators with its full force, by "them also must I BRING." This is one of those passages in which the simple verb is used with the force of the compound, "κἀκεῖνα μὲ δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν, hoc est, συναγαγεῖν, congregare, uti Theophyl. interpretatur, quam explicationem juvat, quod cap. xi. 52. dicitur: vel, προσ-

ayeiv. adducere, minime ad Ecclesiæ tile." *Grotii Philol. Sac.* lib. iii. tract 8. can. 1.

NOTE CLIII.

"If we would obtain any thing at God's hand, we must not only ask it, but seek for it. He that having prayed, sits still without adding his endeavour, shall not receive the thing he prayeth for: for he must not onely *orare*, but *laborare; pro quibus enim orandum, pro iis laborandum est; to this end* the Apostle would have us to *pull up our faint hands and weak knees;* Heb. xii. And where we have asked grace, we must be carefull that we ourselves be not wanting unto grace, as well as we were carefull that grace should not be wanting unto us." *Bp. Andrews on Prayer,* Serm. III.

NOTE CLIV.

The vanity of all such attempts cannot be more clearly shewn, than by a fair statement of what the Church must concede, if she would remove every occasion of offence, which different classes of Dissenters have taken against her. It will thus appear, that she may uncharch herself; but that such a suicidal weakness could not tend to unite those, who, after all she could surrender, would still have subjects for interminable dispute among themselves. Each of the principal sects, into which Protestant Dissenters are divided, differs at least as much from the rest, as they all do from the Church. And her compliance with the scruples of one class would but remove her farther from reconciliation with the others, than she now is, while firmly adhering to her own doctrine, discipline, and worship. The impossibility of any plan of comprehension has been forcibly and truly represented upon this ground, by the author to whose examination of Bp. Burnet's Exposition of the Articles I have already had occasion to refer.

"Whereas," says he, "we have Dissenters of several sorts; and they could never yet agree (nor is it likely they ever should agree) upon what terms or alterations to be made in our forms of government and worship, they would all come in. To endeavour to please one,

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and displease another, is only a sure way of bringing all things into confusion, and can never consist with the Apostle's rule of having *all things done decently and in order*.

"Before we can come to the union desired, we must disclaim the very essentials of a Church; which consist in a power from Christ and his Apostles to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments, and give rules and directions for the carrying on the service of God; and leave every one to pray as he pleases, and worship as he pleases, and hear whom he pleases, and believe what he pleases; and thus break all the bonds of union and communion, with a prospect of uniting with we know not who. This is in effect to unchurch ourselves, with the hopes of having a few more than now we have to join with us in the offices of religion, which is the best term it will bear; for communion it cannot be called.

"To be able to join with our Protestant Dissenters, (taking only five or six of the chief sects amongst them,) before we can do it, we must lay aside several of our Articles; we must cancel our Canons, renounce our orders, or declare them needless, if not superstitious and popish; we must throw away our Common Prayer Book; quite alter the constitution of the government, so far as concerns the Lords Spiritual: we must perfectly new-mould both Church and State: we must, to please the Anabaptists, be all baptised again; and to please the Quakers, renounce water baptism, and the use of all outward sacraments: we must deny the Divinity of Christ, and never give glory to any but the Father, if we hope for peace with the Socinian. These, and many other, are the terms we must come up to, if we have any thoughts of a general union, and would not have it any longer said, that we differ with them in things of *less importance, or about things indifferent*.

"But now, on the other hand, since it is impossible for the Church to come up to such terms as will please all Dissenters, thereby to put an end to our differences, till they are all agreed among themselves, (which it is morally impossible to suppose they ever should be;) it is evident, that the blame of separation wholly lies at the door of the Dissenters: it is to them, and not to the Church, we owe our divisions. There is not any thing

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of moment they can object to us. But if there be such a thing as heresie or schism; if there be such a thing as a church or church-government; if there be an obligation to decency and order in religion; if all are not upon the level, but there is in Scripture such a thing as being *subject one to another*, and something of government there must be both in Church and State; then that which the Church of England hath to say, for her not being able to comply with her several adversaries, is this; that it is impossible to please them all, especially considering, that what they insist upon and oppose, are things so very material, as to be of the very essence of a church; and at the same time, what we have to object against them is, that for the most part they separate themselves from us, upon pretence of a few ceremonies only, which they themselves cannot but acknowledge to be *of their own nature indifferent*; they may come into us, by the help of a very small degree of Christian submission and compliance; but for the Church to pretend to go in to all that dissent from her, cannot end in any thing less than an entire ceasing to be a Church.

"This being the true state of the case between the Church of England and our Dissenters, with respect to the differences of religion between them and us; it plainly follows, that, though a toleration be very practicable, and is no more than what is now granted by law, yet a comprehension is impracticable." *Prefatory Discourse*, &c. p. 100.

It will be difficult to prove, either that the statements of this sound and forcible writer were exaggerated, or that any material alteration has since taken place, which may render a renewal of such attempts expedient at the present moment, or furnish a rational expectation of their success. It is then to be hoped, that they, who wish to lay a solid foundation for unity, will be content to build on the platform of the Church: and that all who ardently long for the revival of true charity, will range themselves under her banners, and support her mild and legitimate supremacy. To such persons, the following observations of Puller may furnish matter for profitable reflection. "As for others among

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us, who sometime have appeared weary of their contests, however unsettled, hovering, as it were, in some motions for union, and frequently are toiling themselves in tedious contemplations of new plots and schemes of government; framing to themselves ideas, not very Platonical, for peace and settlement; I conceive a seasonable conviction among such of the real moderation of our Church, might save some of them grievous labours for the future: for how deficient they generally have been, they themselves have shewed: and if our Church is very moderate already, I need not say they have been very superfluous. There are indeed those, who are still requiring that the Protestant profession among us be settled in a due latitude; whereas we sincerely think the very thing desired is already the true temperament of our Church; and such also as in no sort encourageth any indifferency or neutrality in religion, nor offers any such principles to her sons, as allows them, Proteus or Vertumnus like, to be susceptible of divers shapes and forms in religion; as our adversaries, who do not understand our Church, do suspect: whereas the more any are fixed, according to the right principles of our Church; the truer and firmer Protestants such are, we shall manifestly prove: and the more any are such, the more truly moderate they are, and their designs for peace must needs be the most discreet of any, and the more to purpose." *Fuller's Moderation of the Church of England.* Preface.

NOTE CLV.

In a visitation sermon on Philippians i. 15. preached before Bishop Seth Ward, A. D. 1683, by John Barrow, the following pertinent observations are addressed to the Clergy, on the necessity of arming the Church against external opposition by the preservation of internal concord. "Hence I infer the vast obligation under which we all are, to avoid *contention* one with another. For, why should we, who have had both the honour and the blessing of the same episcopal imposition of hands, have the same great concern of souls to advance, and do it by preaching the same Gospel of peace, why, of all men, should we have variance with each other?

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It is too much occasion of contest our enemies give us; and with them it is a *noble contention*, because it is a *contending* for the *truth*. But if to the breaches they make upon us, we will open more of our own accord, and divide that force with which we should oppose them; they may in all probability succeed, but it will be little credit either to our *courage* or to our *integrity*. In two words, could so monstrous a thing be supposed, as that any of our own body could fly in the face of their lawful superiors, betray the peace and settlement of the Church of which they are members, and *preach* or *act* out of *envy* and *strife*; the mildest thing to be said of them is, that the greatest kindness they can shew to our Church, next to that of public retractation and amendment, would be *publicly* to renounce it. For the same reason that it would be better for the *obstinate* and *scandalous* to renounce their baptism, than under the *pretence* of it to fall into such practices, as cause the name of Christ to be blasphemed." P. 30.

A deep conviction of their danger, who thus abuse their station in the ministry to the purposes of faction and division, and of the temptations too often suggested to the human heart, by the proud consciousness of superior intellectual endowments, induced the learned Hickes passionately to exclaim; "I would not be an heretick or schismatick in the Church, to have the wisdom of Solomon, the tongues of St. Paul, and the eloquence of Apollos, no not to be caught up into Paradise, and hear those unutterable things. I would not be the best preacher that ever was, and speak in the pulpit by inspiration, to have that accusation lye against me, which St. Paul drew up against the Corinthians, of envy, strife, and schism. The good angel, which keeps the door of heaven, would not exchange his humility, nor lose the rectitude of his will, to have the knowledge of the most enlightened of the seraphin, or of the archangels, which stands before the throne of God: for knowledge, and wit, and other intellectual excellencies, though they make a difference between a learned man and an idiot, and between one of the seven spirits, called the seven eyes of God, and a vulgar angel; yet they can make no difference betwixt a man or an angel

from the devil, who can speak with the tongues of men and angels, who knows as much as any archangel, and much more than any man." In the same spirit he declares, in a subsequent part of this discourse; "It is better to be humble, than to be a prophet; it is better to be righteous, than to have the faith of miracles; and it is better to be holy, than to have the gift of tongues. But to be peaceable, and love union, is as great a grace, as to be humble, righteous, and holy; nay as to be pure and temperate: for—it is equalled with all those, and many other of the prime graces in the New Testament, it is reckoned with many of them among the fruits of the Spirit; and the *fruits* of the Spirit are better and more desirable than the gifts thereof." *Hickes's Posthumous Discourses*, Sermon VII. It is fervently to be wished, that such may ever be the settled conviction of those, who are called to minister in the Church of England: that they may seek for peace in the spirit of peace; and that their labours to restore Christian unity may be directed by a true knowledge of its essentials; and a firm persuasion that any temporary association, founded upon their surrender, however specious may be its object, or alluring its pretensions, will only increase the disorders which it aims at removing; and finally terminate in the downfall of the Church, and the irremediable corruption of that pure and apostolic faith, of which it is the legitimate depositary.

The indefatigable opponent of Dury's plausible but ill-devised schemes for reconciling the Protestant Churches, closes his labours with the following animated prayer, which I trust I may be allowed to recommend to the serious consideration of all who may peruse the present volume.

"Te igitur appello, te adoro Christe Jesu, cujus Ecclesiæ salus agitur, respice propitius, ac miserere gregis tui tantopere afflicti. Vides, non sine indignatione, dissidia quotidie gliscere, et incrementa capere, non privata inter paucas, sed publica inter multas magnasque Ecclesias: vides, adversariorum pertinacia, odia eousque processisse, ut eos omnes, qui tibi in vera fidei unitate adhærescunt, hæreseos nomine infament. Succurre tu igitur, et subveni huic malo, potenti tua dextra.

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Excita Constantinos, Marcianos, Theodosios, quibus doctrinæ sinceritas, et Ecclesiæ tranquillitas curæ et cordi est, concede propitius, ut omnes cogitationes, omnia consilia, omnem auctoritatem et potentiam suam conferant ad populos Christianos conciliandos, et firma stabilique concordia inter se devinciendos. Evelle ex cordibus hominum omnes impiorum dogmatum radices, omnes irarum ac discordiarum spinas, quæ perpetuo succrescentes seminis boni profectum impediunt. Procurate Christianis omnibus illam quam tantopere in ultimis tabulis voluntatis tuæ commendasti, pacem et animorum conjunctionem, *Diligite vos invicem:* fac ut nos diligamus, non quidem Pharisæos, non Sadducæos, non Pseudo-Apostolos, aut qui fucato fratrum nomine appellari gestiunt, sed filios tuos, amicos tuos, et ejusdem nobiscum fidei alumnos. Si vero omnino in terris pax sperari non potest, quod detestabile omen clementer avertat Deus, sed tamen si nulla spes reliqua est, in terris tam exoptatum diem videndi, tu interea conserva Ecclesiam tuam sub cruce, dissidiis ac contentionibus ingemiscentem, tuere in vera tui confessione ac invocatione, donec ipse venias, postremo totum orbem judicaturus, et lites omnes decisurus, ubi tandem in unum, cum sanctorum angelorum et martyrum in cœlo triumphantium millibus, Ecclesiæ corpus coalescamus, et una voce, unoque consensu, illud concinamus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, Dominus Deus Zebaoth, plena est omnis terra gloria ejus." *Meisner's Irenicum Duræanum, sub. fin.*

THE END.

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